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PART VIII.

FURTHER CORRESPONDENCE

RESPECTING THE

AFFAIRS

OF

ASIATIC TURKEY AND ARABIA.

233

October to December 1912.

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CONFIDENTIAL.

Further Correspondence respecting the Affairs of Asiatic Turkey and Arabia.

Part VIII.

[41194] No. 1.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 1.)

(No. 416.)
(Telegraphic.) R. *Constantinople, October* 1, 1912.

YOUR telegram No. 638 of 20th September.

His Majesty's consul at Jeddah reports provisions very scarce and prices very high, and states that, though not necessary, it is advisable that pilgrims should bring their own supplies. No answer yet received from Hodeidah.

[41196] No. 2.

Sir F. Bertie to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 1.)

(No. 141.)
(Telegraphic.) R. *Paris, October* 1, 1912.

YOUR telegram No. 458 of 27th September.

French Ambassador was instructed to urge Turkish Government not to dispatch more troops to Samos. Instructions in the sense desired by you are being sent to him to-day on which he will act should Turkish Government persist in sending reinforcements.

[40350] No. 3.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Lowther.

(No. 466.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, October* 1, 1912.

I TRANSMIT to your Excellency herewith copy of a telegram from the Viceroy of India* and of a letter from the India Office† regarding Turkish activity with respect to the lighting and buoyage of the Persian Gulf.

In view of the proposals of His Majesty's Government contained in the memorandum handed to the Turkish Ambassador on the 18th July last (see Asiatic Turkey print, 18th July, section 1), I have to request your Excellency to bring to the notice of the Turkish Minister for Foreign Affairs, in a friendly manner, the reports received regarding the buoy and the light-ship, and to warn him against a disturbance of the *status quo* by the Ottoman Government.

I am, &c.
E. GREY.

* See Part VII, Enclosure in No. 228.
† Part VII, No. 276.

[40759] No. 4.

Sir Edward Grey to Mr. Beaumont.

(No. 189.)
(Telegraphic.) R. *Foreign Office, October* 2, 1912.

YOUR telegram No. 43 of 28th September: Samos.

I approve your language to Minister for Foreign Affairs.

You should inform him that you have now received instructions to dissuade the Greek Government strongly from such a measure as the contemplated dispatch of a Greek ship of war to Samos. You should point out that the affairs of Samos in the past have been the interest of Russia, France, and Great Britain, and that the two latter Powers, who now have cruisers on the spot, do not need assistance. You should also point out to the Greek Government that the execution of such a project would probably be regarded as provocative by Turkey.

Your French colleague will receive similar instructions and you should consult with him before acting in order that your language may be analogous.

(Repeated to Paris, No. 488, and St. Petersburgh, No. 955.)

[40750] No. 5.

Sir Edward Grey to Mr. Dering.

(No. 352.)
(Telegraphic.) R. *Foreign Office, October* 2, 1912.

YOUR telegram No. 110 of 22nd September and Mr. Marling's telegram No. 404 of 28th September. In the circumstances, it would not be possible to accept Italian offer. You should express regret that Italian Government do not see their way to permitting British consular officer to travel as suggested, and that we fear his voyaging on an Italian man-of-war might be open to misinterpretation.

(Repeated to Constantinople, No. 701.)

[40753] No. 6.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Lowther.

(No 700.)
(Telegraphic.) R. *Foreign Office, October* 2, 1912.

YOUR telegram No. 408 of 28th September: Samos.

I should like to have some particulars as to complaint against British consul before deciding as to a visit to Samos by His Majesty's consul-general.

[41315] No. 7.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Lowther.

(No. 702.)
(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, October* 2, 1912.

SAMOS.

Turkish Ambassador has informed us that it has been decided to withdraw Turkish troops from Samos, as order can be maintained by British and French seamen. It is therefore desirable the ships should remain for the present at Samos. You should consult with your French and Russian colleagues as to sending consuls-general at Smyrna, or their delegates, to Samos to report on situation there.

(Repeated to Paris, No. 489; St. Petersburgh, No. 956; Crete, No. 179; and Athens, No. 190.)

[41119] No. 8.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir F. Bertie.

(No. 484.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, October* 2, 1912.

M. CAMBON read to Sir A. Nicolson on the 28th September a telegram announcing that a five days' armistice had been concluded at Samos, and that the

commanders of the French and British men-of-war there requested instructions. M. Cambon wished to know what instructions we were prepared to give. Sir A. Nicolson told his Excellency that our commanders had instructions, which were (1) to avoid any intervention whatever in the internal affairs of the island; (2) to afford such protection as was absolutely necessary to foreign lives and property; and (3) to prevent, if possible, any more Cretans from landing. Sir A. Nicolson said he did not know what further instructions could be sent, and added that he understood that the captain of the "Bruix" had intimated that he would forward the demands of the islanders for the consideration of the Powers. Our commanders, rightly, as Sir A. Nicolson considered, had abstained from giving any such assurance. M. Cambon agreed, and remarked that the commanders should not mix themselves up with Samian demands.

I am, &c.
E. GREY.

[41400] No. 9.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received October 3.)

Sir, *India Office, October* 2, 1912.

IN continuation of this Office letter of the 19th September, I am directed to state that the Government of India now report that instructions have been issued to the political resident at Aden to telegraph direct to the British Ambassador at Rome, so far as regards pilgrim vessels touching at Aden, the details referred to in Sir R. Rodd's telegram of the 23rd July.

I am, &c.
LIONEL ABRAHAMS.

[41428] No. 10.

Sir John Jackson (Limited) to Foreign Office.—(Received October 3.)

Sir, *53, Victoria Street, Westminster, London, October* 2, 1912.

IN further reference to your letter, dated the 3rd July, 1912, and our acknowledgment of same, dated the 4th July, 1912, we now beg to hand you herewith a memorandum with respect to the irrigation works in Mesopotamia, which we hope will give you all the information you require.

We are, &c.
For Sir John Jackson (Limited),
JOHN J. WARBRICK, *Director.*

Enclosure in No. 10.

Memorandum on Irrigation Works in Mesopotamia.

SIR WILLIAM WILLCOCKS was employed by the Ottoman Government for several years to prepare projects for works of irrigation and flood prevention in Mesopotamia, and in 1910 the execution of some of the more urgent works was begun by the Government under his direction.

This method of carrying on the works was found to lead to difficulties, and in the spring of 1911 the Government announced their intention of inviting tenders for the works. Sir John Jackson visited Bagdad in February 1911 with the result that a contract was concluded between the Government, represented by Nazim Pasha, Vali of Bagdad, and Sir John Jackson (Limited). Under this contract, Sir John Jackson (Limited) were to carry on the works for account of the Government, being repaid the actual cost of the work, plus a fixed percentage. This interim contract was to terminate as soon as an adjudication had been held and a contract for the works concluded as the result of such adjudication.

In response to the invitation for tenders for a first section of the works (value a little over 1,000,000*l.*), tenders were submitted (on the 26th June, 1911) by two firms

only—both of them English—Sir John Jackson (Limited) and Messrs. S. Pearson and Sons (Limited). The two tenders were almost identical in amount.

By this time, Sir William Willcocks submitted his plans and projects in a more complete shape, thus making it possible for the Government to take in hand a more important section of the works. Accordingly, no action was taken by the Government upon the tenders, and the works were continued by Sir John Jackson (Limited) under the above-mentioned interim contract.

On the 19th December, 1911, the Minister of Public Works (Holoussi Bey) invited tenders for the whole of the works recommended by Sir William Willcocks, to the value of perhaps 15,000,000*l.* or more. Tenders were to be submitted on the 2nd January, 1912.

It was obviously impracticable for any contractor or any financiers to take the responsibility of so large a scheme on the incomplete data furnished by Sir William Willcocks, and the wholly inadequate period allowed for the preparation of tenders appeared to indicate that the object was not to obtain serious offers. As the result of energetic protests, the date was postponed to the 20th January, 1912. Before that day arrived, Holoussi Bey had been succeeded by Djavid Bey as Minister of Public Works, and the invitation was cancelled.

In February 1912 Djavid Bey issued a fresh invitation for tenders (to be submitted on the 20th April, 1912), on a new basis, for two groups of works: the first group, including the Hindia Barrage, the Habbania Escape, and certain subsidiary works; the second, including Tigris protection works and certain other works.

Only two complete tenders were presented: one from Sir John Jackson (Limited), with the financial support of the National Bank of Turkey, and one from Messrs. S. Pearson and Sons (Limited), supported by the Ottoman Bank. A so-called tender by Messrs. Pauling was excluded, as no price was submitted by them.

The documents on which the Ministry invited tenders were, in several points, ambiguous or incomplete. The tenders of both firms were therefore accompanied by covering letters interpreting or varying the Government conditions. Messrs. Pearson's tender for the first group of works was lower than Sir John Jackson's, but the stipulations inserted by Messrs. Pearson regarding the financial side of the arrangement more than compensated the difference in amount.

The Government held that the covering letters constituted a variation of the conditions proposed by the Government, and both competitors were invited to withdraw their letters. Messrs. Pearson substituted a new covering letter for the former one, and Messrs. Jackson withdrew theirs, believing that any differences of opinion as to the interpretation of the documents could be adjusted in the negotiation of the detailed contract. Thereupon Messrs. Jackson were declared "adjudicataire provisoire." The commission appointed to report on the tenders expressed, at the same time, the opinion that the price ought not to exceed 2,500,000*l.*

Negotiations followed, but led to no result. The principal points on which agreement was, in the end impossible, were the following. They relate, as will be seen, principally to the financial side of the arrangements:—

1. The Government required the contractor to accept Government 4 per cent. bonds as equivalent to cash at the price of 83½ per cent., a price very much higher than that at which such bonds could be realised under present conditions.

The cash thus obtained was to be held by a bank and paid out to the contractor according to the progress of the works. If the contract was for any reason forfeited, the whole of the remaining balance of cash was to be repaid to the Government.

It is obvious that it was only possible to agree to an artificially high price for the bonds by adding the loss on this head to the price quoted for the work. If the work ceased for any reason before it was completed there would be no means of meeting the loss on the bonds. It was therefore proposed that, in the event of forfeiture of the contract, the contractor should be entitled to return to the Government any bonds which remained unsold, instead of paying to the Government the cash equivalent. To this the Government refused to agree.

2. The contractor was required to pay the interest-coupons on the bonds up to the time of the "réception provisoire" of the works. It was evident that the period necessary for the construction of the works might be prolonged by causes over which the contractor had no control, such as disturbances of public order, deficiency of labour supply, unusual floods, &c., and that, in such cases, a very heavy and indefinite liability would be incurred in respect of the payment of interest.

It was therefore proposed that if the period of execution were prolonged through *force majeure* the contractor should cease to be liable for the payment of coupons during such extended periods. This was refused by the Government.

The conditions were unreasonable in other respects.

For instance, although the tenders were made on plans, and a statement of quantities prepared by Sir William Willcocks for the Government, and furnished by the Government to the tenderers, nevertheless the tenderers were required to take all risks of errors in these plans and quantities.

The arbitration clause, also, was unsatisfactory. The nature of the proposed contract was such as to give special importance to questions which might require arbitration, but the Government desired to limit the application of the arbitration clause to a very small number of points; and also stipulated that the third arbitrator should be named, not by some impartial and competent authority, but by the president of the Turkish Cour de Cassation.

The tenders submitted on the 20th April, 1912, having been cancelled, the Government issued a fresh invitation for tenders to be submitted on the 27th June, 1912, re-stating at the same time, in a more absolute form, the conditions which had been found unacceptable, and fixing a maximum limit of £T. 2,550,000. Under these conditions both firms declined to tender, and the work is still being carried on under the interim contract with Sir John Jackson (Limited).

It will be seen that there have now been four separate invitations to tender, each involving much study and labour on the part of the tendering firms. Owing to the unpractical and unreasonable nature of the conditions proposed, the tenders have led to no practical result. Sir John Jackson (Limited) have special reason to complain of the procedure followed. They alone have had practical experience of the work, and the result of the abortive tenders is to place their actual and possible competitors in possession of valuable information as to the cost of the works, which would not otherwise be available.

[41497] No. 11.

Sir F. Bertie to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 3.)

(No. 147.)
(Telegraphic.) *Paris, October 3, 1912.*

FRENCH cruiser "Bruix" has just informed French Government by wireless telegraphy that the Prince of Samos has requested Turkish Government to recall the 800 men sent recently, as their presence impedes restoration of order.

[41487] No. 12.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 3.)

(No. 423.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, October, 3, 1912*

SAMOS.

Russian Ambassador informs me that Russian stationnaire at Athens will be sent to the island.

[41400] No. 13.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Lowther.

(No. 709.)
(Telegraphic.) R. *Foreign Office, October 3, 1912.*

YOUR telegram No. 362 of 3rd September: Pilgrim ships.

Indian Government have issued instructions to political resident at Aden to telegraph direct to His Majesty's representative at Rome the details referred to in Sir R. Rodd's telegram No. 83 of 23rd July, respecting pilgrim vessels touching at Aden.

(Repeated to Rome, No. 357.)

[41501] No. 14.

Tewfik Pasha to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 4.)

(Particulière.) *Ambassade Impériale ottomane, Londres, le 3 octobre*, 1912.

Chère Excellence,

JE vous transmets, pour votre information, le télégramme suivant que je viens de recevoir et qui contient des renseignements fournis par le consul général de Turquie à Philippopoli :—

"A la suite mobilisation jeunes musulmans ont été arrêtés. Population de la ville est en effervescence. Un des membres du Gouvernement a déclaré que les musulmans peuvent être l'objet d'attaque. Ces derniers ont extrêmement peur. Tous musulmans vus dans la rue sont aussitôt arrêtés et conduits par les Bulgars à la caserne de Yaka. Des perquisitions ont été effectuées dans les maisons musulmanes. Consul et chancelier ont été insultés ; leur situation devient de plus en plus difficile. Leur sortie du consulat est dangereuse."

Veuillez, &c.
TEVFIK.

P.S.—Je vous envoie, ci-joint, un télégramme que je viens de recevoir à l'instant au sujet des affaires de Samos.

Enclosure in No. 14.

Telegram received by Tewfik Pacha.

PAR mon télégramme je vous avais informé de la décision du Gouvernement Impérial de retirer ses troupes de Samos. A la réception de cette nouvelle, le Prince nous avise que la situation des autorités deviendrait excessivement dangereuse en présence du nombre considérable des insurgés, lesquels chercheraient à prendre en main l'administration de l'île et y établir un Gouvernement insurrectionnel. Il importe donc que les navires de guerre français et anglais y restent quelque temps encore et que les détachements de marins qu'ils ont débarqués soient renforcés et en mesure d'assurer l'ordre et la sécurité. Le Prince insiste aussi sur l'envoi à Vathy des consuls généraux d'Angleterre et de France à Smyrne pour qu'il puisse s'entendre avec eux au sujet des mesures à prendre.

[41500] No. 15.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 4.)

(No. 424.)
(Telegraphic.) R. *Constantinople, October* 3, 1912.

MR. MARLING'S telegram No. 404 of 28th September.

I have received a telegram from vice-consul at Hodeidah, dated the 21st September, but in so mutilated a condition as to be almost unintelligible.

I gather that owing to outbreak of cholera at Camara, and alleged irregularities in treatment of pilgrims on British ships, he considers his presence there urgently required, and asks that ship may be provided to convey him. He further suggests that Government of India should depute sanitary expert to Camara to investigate.

Dr. Clemow fully approves of proposal of vice-consul to visit Camara, but doubts whether Sanitary Board or the Turkish Government would consent to dispatch of expert from India. I am of the same opinion.

Continued interruption of cables is seriously hampering the sanitary service, and refusal of Italian Government to allow consul's boat to pass makes things still more difficult. Dr. Clemow confirms that there has been cholera on five ships from Bombay and two from Dutch Indies.

[41505] No. 16.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 4.)

(No. 425.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, October* 3, 1912.

FOLLOWING from consul at Smyrna of 3rd October :—

"Commander of troops asks whether protection of British and French ships at Samos may be given to cover withdrawal of troops from Samos."

[41608] No. 17.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 4.)

(No. 426.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, October* 4, 1912.

FOLLOWING from consul at Smyrna, dated 3rd October :—

"Following from consular officer at Samos :—

"' All quiet at present. Prince has been instructed from Constantinople to order withdrawal of additional troops sent from Smyrna.'"

[41500] No. 18.

Sir Edward Grey to Mr. Dering.

(No. 361.)
(Telegraphic.) R. *Foreign Office, October* 4, 1912.

SIR G. LOWTHER'S telegram No. 424 of 3rd October : Conveyance of vice-consul at Hodeidah to Camaran.

You should point out to Italian Government the serious inconvenience that is being caused, and the danger that may result from the outbreak of cholera ; and enquire again whether they are still unable to see their way to sanction the transport of the vice-consul in a boat flying the consular flag.

(Repeated to Constantinople, No. 717.)

[40516] No. 19.

Foreign Office to India Office.

Sir, *Foreign Office, October* 4, 1912.

I AM directed by Secretary Sir Edward Grey to transmit to you herewith, to be laid before the Marquess of Crewe, copies of correspondence, as marked in the margin,* regarding an arrangement arrived at between the National Bank of Turkey, the Deutsche Bank, and the Asiatic Petroleum Company for working petroleum deposits in any part of the Ottoman Empire in Europe and Asia, whereby the interests of the Anglo-Persian Oil Company may be vitally affected.

In view of the importance of the subject, Sir E. Grey concurs in the proposal of the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty that it would be desirable to have the matter fully discussed by representatives of the India Office, the Admiralty, and this department, and he would be glad to learn whether this view is shared by Lord Crewe, and, if so, whether his Lordship will depute a member of the India Office to represent him at such a meeting.

I am, &c.
LOUIS MALLET.

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* To Admiralty, September 13 (with enclosure); Admiralty, September 26; to Sir H. Babbington Smith, September 28; to Admiralty, October 4, 1912.

[40516] No. 20.

Foreign Office to Admiralty.

Sir, *Foreign Office, October* 4, 1912.

I AM directed by Secretary Sir Edward Grey to acknowledge the receipt of your confidential letter of the 26th ultimo, regarding possible concessions of oil-bearing lands in Mesopotamia to a foreign syndicate, whereby British naval interests might be affected.

I am to state, in reply, that Sir E. Grey has caused Sir H. Babington Smith to be informed that His Majesty's Government are unable to support the National Bank of Turkey in the matter, and he concurs in their Lordships' view of the desirability of the subject being discussed by representatives of the Admiralty, India Office, and this department.

He has accordingly brought the question to the notice of the Secretary of State for India in a letter of which a copy is enclosed.*

I am, &c.
LOUIS MALLET.

[41775] No. 21.

Admiralty to Foreign Office.—(Received October 5.)

Sir, *Admiralty, October* 5, 1912.

I AM commanded by my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty to transmit, for the information of the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, paraphrase of a telegram dated the 5th instant from the Commander-in-chief, Mediterranean, relative to affairs at Samos.

I am, &c.
W. GRAHAM GREENE.

Enclosure in No. 21.

Commander-in-chief, Mediterranean, to Admiralty.

(Telegraphic.) P. *Gibraltar, October* 5, 1912.

COMMANDING officer of the "Bruix" has, according to report from Medea, been told by Italian Admiral Amero that latter will not prevent Turkish troops returning to mainland. Quiet continues Samos. The general belief is that all Turkish troops, including original garrison of 500, will leave island. Arrangements are being made by Turks to embark them at Vathy.

[4103] No. 22.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 5.)

(No. 430.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, October* 5, 1912.

FOLLOWING from consul at Smyrna:—

"Following from vice-consul at Samos:—

"'All the troops stationed at Samos will be withdrawn by order of Turkey. Italian men-of-war cruising off Samos have informed Samians that this will allow the Imperial troops, by order of admiral and commander-in-chief, to return to mainland. Quiet continues.'"

Minister for Foreign Affairs told me last night that there was a difficulty in removing Turkish troops, as M. Sofoulis would at once proclaim a republic, and Prince and Government officials would be in danger unless sailors from foreign ships of war could protect them and maintain order.

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* No. 19.

[41791] No. 23.

Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 5.)

(No. 353.)
(Telegraphic.) *St. Petersburgh, October* 5, 1912.

YOUR telegram No. 966 of 4th October: Samos.

Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs said he thought it most desirable that Turkish troops should be withdrawn as soon as possible and that therefore he saw no objection to covering their withdrawal with our ships. A small Russian ship was on its way to Samos more for the principle involved than for the assistance it could render. If Turks required protection for their transports on their way home we might explain to Italy delicate position in which we were placed as the protecting Powers of Samos.

[41743] No. 24.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Lowther.

(No. 473.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, October,* 5, 1912.

TEWFIK PASHA informed Sir A. Nicolson on the 2nd October that it had been decided to withdraw the Turkish troops from Samos, as his Government considered that order could be maintained by the French and British ships there. Sir A. Nicolson said that he was sure that I would receive this news with satisfaction. Tewfik Pasha again expressed the hope that the French, British, and Russian consuls-general at Smyrna, or their delegates, would be sent to the island to report on the situation.

I am, &c.
E. GREY.

[41818] No. 25.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 7.)

(No. 810. Confidential.)
Sir, *Constantinople, September* 28, 1912.

WITH reference to my telegram No. 378 of the 17th September relative to the agreement between the National Bank of Turkey, the Deutsche Bank, and the Asiatic Petroleum Company, I have the honour to report that Mr. Baring gave me the following additional information, of which he appeared to have come into possession but recently.

The syndicate does not aim at obtaining a monopoly of the oil industry throughout the Empire, but in the first place to make good, if possible, the alleged rights of the Deutsche Bank under the agreement of 1904. If and when that object is achieved, it is proposed to undertake operations in the area covered by that agreement, i.e., the vilayets of Bagdad and Mosul, and also in the zone, 20 kilom. on either side of the axis of the line reserved to the Bagdad Railway under its original concession.

As regards the rest of the Empire, "permis de recherches" are to be taken out for any promising areas, but these would be worked strictly in accordance with the existing mining law.

I understand that the group which is endeavouring to obtain recognition of Tahsin Pasha's concession (see Sir G. Lowther's despatch No. 293 of the 9th April) is still active, but I have no knowledge of their prospects of success.

I have, &c.
CHARLES M. MARLING.

[41821] No. 26.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 7.)

(No. 819.)
Sir, *Constantinople, October* 1, 1912.

WITH reference to your despatch No. 433 of the 10th September, I have the honour to transmit to you herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from

His Majesty's vice-consul at Hodeidah, reporting on the hostile action taken for the third time by the Italian gun-boat "Stafetta" against that town.

I have the honour to point out that Dr. Vice-Consul Richardson's telegram reporting the shelling of Hodeidah, which I repeated to you, was apparently sent off on the 15th August; its arrival at Constantinople was dated the 18th August, but it was only delivered at this embassy on the 20th August.

I have, &c.
GERARD LOWTHER.

Enclosure in No. 26.

Vice-Consul Richardson to Mr. Marling.

(No. 26 R.)
Hodeidah, August 17, 1912.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to confirm my cablegram No. 33 of the 15th instant, reporting the hostile action taken against this town for the third time recently by an Italian war-ship.

The gun-boat "Stafetta," that had arrived here the previous day, opened fire at about a quarter past 10 on Thursday morning on the military camp at the Hali and the large ammunition magazine to the north that had been partially destroyed through the bombardment by the "Piemonte" and "Caprera" on the 27th ultimo.

Although between thirty and forty shells were discharged against these places, no damage whatever was done.

Five soldiers were wounded at the outset of the firing in attempting to leave their tents, and were removed to hospital for treatment.

The cruiser "Cartatone," that arrived on the same morning, stood by the "Stafetta" during the bombardment, and left at noon for Camaran.

Both vessels stood close in-shore during the bombardment and were noticed to be carefully observing the town, being on the look-out most probably for the attack on it by the Zereneek tribesmen under Mahomed Yahya and other chieftains with whom they had prearranged such attack.

Finding no unusual stir on shore, the "Stafetta" ceased firing and steamed to the southward to ascertain, it was supposed, the cause of the failure of their allies to co-operate by land.

This bombardment of Hodeidah with a simultaneous attack by land from the south by Zereneek tribesmen was fully expected, I myself having received intelligence on the subject some four days previously.

The authorities, it would appear, were forewarned, and doubled their precautions for the protection of the town and the safety of foreign residents and their property.

On or about the 11th instant, *i.e.*, four days prior to the bombardment, the akils and headmen of the Hawwak tribe inhabiting the villages bordering immediately on the southern outskirts and extending as far as a place called Mandar, that is, about an hour's march from Hodeidah, proceeded in deputation on board the gun-boat "Stafetta," and complained to the commander of the action taken by Italian war-ships on two recent occasions against their unprotected and harmless hamlet at Mandar.

The Italians replied that they had bombarded because information had been received by them from the Zereneek and Jabha clansmen to the effect that the Hawwak tribe had a stock of ammunition belonging to the Turks stored in an old Arab fort standing in the midst of their village of Mandar; further, that they (the Hawwak) were a barrier to the advance on Hodeidah by their allies, viz., the two above-mentioned clans.

The deputation of Arabs informed the Italian commander that there was no truth whatever in the statement of the Jabha tribe, with whom their own (the Hawwak) had a long-standing blood feud, about the ammunition store in their midst, which, they added, was made by their enemies to get them into trouble.

They said that while it was not possible to permit the passage of their enemies through their country, the road along the sea-coast was, if they chose, open to them in their march against Hodeidah, promising at the same time not to molest the latter.

The Hawwak spokesmen invited the Italian war-ship to send an interpreter on shore to examine their village for the ammunition store it was alleged to contain, and also suggested that the interpreter might be instructed to observe whether any obstacles were placed by their clansmen in the way of the Zereneek and Jabha tribes during their projected advance.

The Italian commander then paid the tribesmen compensation for damage done to the village of Mandar, and dismissed the deputation after the distribution of a few presents.

It might here be recalled that Arabs of this same Hawwak tribe, as reported in my preceding despatch, had, in the event of further bombardment of this town, contemplated an attack on, and massacre of, all Europeans and Christians at Hodeidah, as reprisals for the desolation of their village by Italian war-ships. Finding, however, that their attempt of the 3rd was frustrated, owing to the adoption of strong precautionary measures by the local authorities, they decided to appeal to the Italians for compensation for losses suffered by them.

While on board, the "Stafetta" informed the Hawwak akils (village headmen) that it was proposed to bombard Hodeidah, conjointly with the attacks by Zereneek and Jabha tribesmen respectively, on the following Thursday and Friday (*i.e.*, the 15th and 16th August).

This information was immediately transmitted to Hodeidah, so that the bombardment reported in this despatch was not unexpected.

The authorities, after the Italian action by sea of the 27th July, had removed all the prisoners from the common gaol to a house situated far outside the town.

The post and telegraph offices that are on the sea front were also vacated, and these services reopened in a building in the heart of the city.

The Treasury and the Government administrative offices were at the same time vacated, as it was feared that the Italians would shell these next.

The two previous bombardments and news of a third pending helped to empty this city of its inhabitants very rapidly, so much so, that out of a population of between 35,000 and 40,000, barely 3,000 or 4,000 were left when the "Stafetta" operated against this town on the 15th instant.

A propos of the repeated castigation by Italian ships of this defenceless and purely commercial port, it would be as well to mention that when the blockade of the Yemen coast was declared by the Italian Government in January last, the *parlementaire* deputed to deliver notifications of the blockade to the foreign consuls on shore, showed us an *aide-mémoire* from the senior naval officer, in which he was specially instructed to inform us that there was no intention whatever to bombard Hodeidah.

Although Italian naval action was only taken against the military quarter and buildings, I might add that these latter are in close proximity to the city in general of which they are a part.

In the circumstances, I think that due notice of their intention to bombard might have been given by the war-ships to the foreign consuls, especially as no opposition from the shore was ever to be anticipated.

The gun-boat "Aretusa" was erroneously mentioned instead of the "Caprera" in my despatch No. 24 as having taken part in conjunction with the cruiser "Piemonte" in the bombardment of the 27th ultimo.

I have, &c.
G. A. RICHARDSON.

[41823]

No. 27.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 7.)

(No. 821.)
Constantinople, October 2, 1912.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to forward to you herewith copy of a despatch from His Majesty's consul-general at Smyrna reporting on the recent disturbances at Samos.

I have, &c.
GERARD LOWTHER.

Enclosure in No. 27.

Consul-General Barnham to Mr. Marling.

(No. 115.)
Smyrna, September 27, 1912.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith copy of a despatch from Vice-Consul Mare describing the progress of fighting at Vathy on the 23rd instant between the insurgents and Imperial troops.

Mr. Marc does not mention the fact reported by the Austrian vice-consul to his consul-general in Smyrna that the commanders of the British and French cruisers had summoned M. Sofoulis to a conference, and that he was to arrive at Vathy for that purpose on the 25th instant.

I have, &c.
HENRY D. BARNHAM.

Enclosure 2 in No. 27

Vice-Consul Marc to Consul-General Barnham.

Samos, September 25, 1912.

Sir,

I REGRET that I have not been able to report to you on the situation of the island since my last letter, dated the 21st September, on account of the telegraph wire having been cut.

A general attack against the Turkish troops occupying the surrounding mountains began from all sides on Monday, the 23rd instant, at 2 o'clock in the afternoon, and is still continuing.

Both parties are fighting with very fanatical bravery.

The Turks are greatly assisted by their two Krupp guns.

Thousands of bullets are passing over the consulate, which is crowded by refugees.

His Majesty's ship "Medea" and the "Bruix" arrived yesterday and landed men to protect the consulates and lives of foreign subjects, according to instructions received from the Admiralty.

It is utterly impossible to find out casualties at present. There must be, however, a good many from both sides. Just now a young man looking out from the window of his house was shot before me, opposite the consulate.

The intervention of the protecting Powers is absolutely necessary, as this state of affairs may continue for a long time.

The total number of Samians in arms, including 100 Cretans, &c., is estimated at 1,000 men. In case the troops are reinforced from the mainland, there will undoubtedly be a general massacre.

Six Italian men-of-war are cruising off the island, and I presume it will not be easy for the Turks to send these reinforcements.

The principal parts of Vathy, inhabited by European subjects, are patrolled by English and French sailors. We have taken all measures to prevent both parties firing in these quarters.

I will do all my best to give you further news, either by post or by wireless through Crete.

I have, &c.
GREGORY D. L. MARC.

[42036] No. 28.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 7.)

(No. 437.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, October 7, 1912.*

FOLLOWING from Consul at Smyrna, dated 6th October:—

"British vice-consul at Samos reports that all the troops have left."

[42037] No. 29.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 7.)

(No. 438.)
(Telegraphic.) R. *Constantinople, October 7, 1912.*

MY telegram No. 416 of 1st October.

Vice-consul at Hodeidah, who cannot communicate with Camaran owing to interruption of cable, reports difficulties are not due to any special operations, but to state of war and blockade generally. He states that provisions from Aden for use of pilgrims are admitted, but recommends, in view of prevalence of cholera, that pilgrims should carry adequate supplies in case quarantine period is extended.

[42064] No. 30.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 7.)

(No. 440.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, October 7, 1912.*

FOLLOWING from captain of "Medea":—

"(Secret.)

"Consider that British Government should be informed of attitude of 'Bruix.' Although Turkish troops have been withdrawn, and there is no danger to foreign subjects, 'Bruix' has not withdrawn her seamen. 'Bruix' appears to be interesting himself generally in affairs of island."

I understand captain of "Bruix" has wider instructions than captains of the British and Russian ships, and that they practically extend to keeping order in island.

[42212] No. 31.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 8.)

(No. 443.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, October 8, 1912.*

SAMOS.

French Ambassador has received news that Prince, since departure of troops, is at mercy of Sofoulis, who has come to Vathy. His Excellency hears that British ship is about to withdraw.

I submit that we cannot leave island to anarchy, and that steps must be taken not only to protect Prince and officials, but to establish some sort of authority.

[42064] No. 32.

*Sir Edward Grey to Sir F. Bertie.**

(No. 527.)
(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, October 8, 1912.*

SIR G. LOWTHER'S telegram No. 440 of 7th October: Samos.

It would be well to expedite visit to Samos of our consuls-general at Smyrna or their delegates, and they should be instructed to report on situation, and if necessary to warn M. Sofoulis that no change in *status quo* of island must be made. The naval commanders should not interfere in internal affairs, and confine themselves to affording, if necessary, protection to lives and properties of foreigners, and to preventing landing of any more Cretans. Pray urge Minister for Foreign Affairs to send necessary instructions to Constantinople.

(Repeat to Constantinople, No. 742.)

[42262] No. 33.

Consul-General Wratislaw to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 9.)

(No. 76.)
Sir, *Canea, Crete, September 30, 1912.*

I HAVE the honour to enclose herewith copy of a report on recent events in Samos, addressed by the commander of His Majesty's ship "Medea" to the commander-in-chief of the Mediterranean Station, with which Commander Keane has had the goodness to supply me.

Commander Keane confirms what I reported in my telegram No. 430 of the 24th instant regarding the presence of only very few Cretans in the band of filibusters who landed in Samos from Nikaria. From other sources I learn that the chief of them was a certain Cretan named Karavitis, a former leader of a Greek band in Macedonia, who has for some time past been domiciled in Piræus. Another Creto-Macedonian named Nicoloudis is also with them, but he too left viâ Athens, and not from Crete

* Also to Sir G. Buchanan (No. 1,000).

direct. He is one of the Cretan deputies for the Greek Chamber, who were elected on the strength of their reputation for hardihood, as being likely persons to force their way through any opposition which might be offered, as reported in my despatch No. 26 of the 27th March last.

I have, &c.
A. C. WRATISLAW.

Enclosure in No. 33.

Commander Keane to Commander-in-chief, Mediterranean.

Sir, *H.M.S. "Medea," Vathi (Samos), September 28, 1912.*

I HAVE the honour to make the following reports on events which have taken place in Samos since my arrival :—

September 24.—"Medea" arrived at Vathi at 5·30 A.M. French cruiser "Bruix" present. Mr. Mare, the British consul, came on board, and reported that on the night of the 18th September an expedition of 100 men landed at Maratrokampo. The majority of the expedition were Greeks from other islands, there being a few Cretans and Macedonians. The expedition was organised in Nikaria, from which island it came direct by steamer and was led by a Samian named Sofoulis.

On landing they were joined by the Samians and advanced on the Turkish garrison of 100 men. The latter retired, first to Carlovassy and eventually towards Vathi, where they were joined by others who had taken up strong positions on the hills surrounding Vathi.

Firing commenced at 2 P.M. on the 23rd near Vathi, when the Samians attacked the Turkish positions from the south side of the harbour. On arrival of "Medea" at daylight on the 24th continuous rifle fire was in progress on the hills around Vathi.

Two Turkish field-guns were also firing from a position just above the lower town. Numbers of people were collected in the consulates, and some desultory firing was going on between the hills and the town.

On conferring with Captain Delage, of the "Bruix," it was agreed that some steps must be taken to stop the firing between the town and the hills, as the lives of the foreign residents were in danger.

Accordingly, Captain Delage and I interviewed the Prince on board the "Bruix," and a letter was sent to the officer commanding Turkish troops requesting him to stop firing on the town.

At the same time, a proclamation was issued by the authorities requesting the Samians to stop firing at the Turks from their houses. As requests were received from the consuls for protection, at 2 P.M. guards were landed from "Bruix" and "Medea," and at dusk armed parties landed to patrol the area inhabited by the foreign residents.

Firing continued in the hills during night of the 24th–25th, but none took place in the town.

September 25.—Reports were received this morning that the Turks had been murdering women and children, raping women, and pillaging the town. As it was feared that the Turks would eventually render the town uninhabitable, Captain Delage proposed to arrange for the protection of the municipality in carrying out their duty in the supply of water, food, light, &c.

I informed him that my instructions did not allow me to go beyond the actual protection of foreign residents, and could not therefore follow him beyond the limit of my orders.

Captain Delage then told me what I had not before realised, *i.e.*, that he had authority from Paris to restore order in Vathi. It was thereupon arranged that my action should be limited in accordance with my instructions, leaving him free to follow his own course.

Accordingly, Captain Delage took measures to ensure the safe resumption of municipal affairs and for the general protection of the town. A neutral zone was arranged, and the inhabitants of upper and lower town were brought into this zone.

During the whole night of the 25th–26th continuous firing took place. The small low-explosive shells fired from the two Turkish Krupp field-guns against the Samians' positions on the hills did not appear to have much effect. The town was quiet owing to the measures adopted by Captain Delage.

September 26.—Captain Delage and I accompanied by Mr. Mare, the British consul, went to the French consulate to discuss arrangements for the protection of the municipality and non-combatants. I again said that I could not go beyond affording protection to foreign residents.

Before I withdrew Captain Delage outlined his proposed course of action to me, which was to bring about a meeting on board the "Bruix" between the opposing leaders and endeavour to arrange an armistice.

Accordingly, during the afternoon the Prince, the Turkish commander, and M. Sofoulis, the Samian leader, met on board the "Bruix," and as a result a suspension of hostilities was agreed to, to last for five days from sunset the 26th September.

Reports received this evening that a reinforcement of 100 Turkish troops had landed from the mainland yesterday.

September 27.—Owing to the cessation of hostilities, everything is quiet to-day. The consulate guards have been withdrawn, but the patrols continue to land. "Bruix's" arrangements are successful, and her officers and men are working harmoniously with the townspeople.

September 28.—The situation continues quiet in Vathi; reports received that the recent reinforcement of Turkish troops had looted the village of Palecastro, 3 miles from Vathi, as well as other houses in the vicinity of Vathi, one of which was the British consul's country house.

P.M.—Information received that at least 500 Turkish reinforcements with two guns have landed during the last few days. These include 100 irregulars, some of whom are Turkish Cretans.

The general situation at present is as follows :—

The Turkish troops and insurgents are holding their positions.

The Turks now number 1,000 men with four guns, while the insurgents do not exceed that number. It appears that there is nothing to stop the Turks from being further reinforced, in which case, when hostilities are resumed, the insurgents will undoubtedly be defeated.

In the meantime, the Samians hope that the protecting Powers are considering their demands, and will be able to persuade Turkey to withdraw the troops from Samos.

I have, &c.
GEORGE M. KEANE, *Commander.*

[42296] No. 34.

Tewfik Pasha to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 9.)

TEWFIK PACHA présente ses compliments à Sir E. Grey, et a l'honneur d'informer son Excellence que le Prince de Samos vient d'aviser le Gouvernement Impérial que le consul honoraire de France a persuadé le commandant du détachement français que, le calme étant revenu dans l'île, il n'y avait plus lieu au maintien dudit détachement, et que sur les instructions reçues du Gouvernement français les troupes françaises seraient bientôt retirées. Or, le Prince annonce que la situation est loin d'être rassurante, car Sofoulis n'attend que le départ des détachements anglo-français pour proclamer son Gouvernement révolutionnaire.

Son Excellence Sir E. Grey sait parfaitement que le Gouvernement Impérial n'a consenti au retrait de ses troupes de l'île qu'à la suite de l'empressement du Gouvernement de Sa Majesté et de celui de la république d'assumer le devoir d'y maintenir l'ordre et de réduire les insurgés à la reconnaissance des droits de l'État souverain. Si donc les détachements anglais et français avaient réellement aujourd'hui l'intention de quitter l'île, et qu'il ne restât aucune force pour agir dans l'île et y rétablir l'ordre, le Gouvernement Impérial se verrait obligé d'ordonner de nouveau le retour des troupes ottomanes à Samos pour sauvegarder la vie des fonctionnaires et des habitants paisibles, que le Prince représente comme sérieusement menacée.

Tewfik Pacha saisit aussi cette occasion pour rappeler au souvenir de son Excellence Sir E. Grey que jusqu'à présent ni le consul général britannique à Smyrne ni un délégué spécial ne s'est encore rendu à Samos et que les détachements militaires étrangers

se trouvent toujours sous la direction des agents consulaires honoraires peu aptes à seconder le Prince et à mener à bonne fin l'œuvre de pacification par suite de leurs relations personnelles d'affaires avec les fauteurs du mouvement insurrectionnel.

Ambassade Impériale ottomane, Londres,
le 8 octobre, 1912.

[42295] No. 35.

Note communicated by M. Cambon, October 9, 1912.

D'APRÈS des renseignements transmis au Ministère des Affaires Étrangères par l'Ambassadeur de France à Constantinople, le consul général de Russie à Smyrne a entretenu son collègue français d'un projet de modification éventuelle du statut organique samien de 1832, qui porterait notamment sur les points suivants :—

1. Réorganiser la gendarmerie samienne en recrutant une partie de ses membres en dehors de l'île parmi les Grecs ottomans et en plaçant à la tête de cette force un officier et quatre sous-officiers étrangers.
2. Étendre la durée des pouvoirs du Prince.
3. Choisir le président de la Cour d'Appel et le président du tribunal parmi les magistrats étrangers à l'île.

Le Ministre des Affaires Étrangères de la république a prié l'Ambassadeur de France à Saint-Pétersbourg de s'enquérir auprès du Gouvernement russe si ces suggestions représentent les dispositions du Cabinet russe à l'égard des Samiens.

M. Paul Cambon a été chargé de demander au Foreign Office si le consul général d'Angleterre à Smyrne a été également saisi de cette question par son collègue russe et, dans l'affirmative, quel accueil le Gouvernement britannique réserverait éventuellement à cette suggestion.

Ambassade de France, Londres,
le 8 octobre, 1912.

[42409] No. 36.

Mr. Dering to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 9.)

(No. 123. Confidential.)
(Telegraphic.) *Rome, October 9,* 1912.

YOUR telegram No. 326 of 26th September.

I learned on best authority last night that the Italian Government expect Turkish Government to accept their counter-proposals, and I understand that, failing agreement, Italian Government will refuse to negotiate any more, and have given Turkish Government until to-morrow, when Reshid Pasha will have reached Constantinople, to decide. My informant confirmed the report that peace is very near. He stated to the Russian Councillor and myself Italy was willing to give up the Ægean islands, but desired to safeguard population as in honour bound from massacre or oppression. He thought that arrangements for future government of the islands should be left to the Great Powers, interested as he knew they were. This could be done later, say, when Macedonia and other reforms were being adjusted. He asked what my Government's views were.

As I reported in my telegram No. 141 of 22nd September, I have anticipated this enquiry, and from this very official, who will doubtless report to the Minister for Foreign Affairs.

I replied that I had no instructions to make any official statement on the subject, but that I could tell him that the Great Powers were naturally much interested in future of islands and their Christian population. My Government considered whole question of regulating the administration of the islands was one to be dealt with by the Great Powers when peace had been concluded between Italy and Turkey. Perhaps a guarantee would be useful that a Turkish Christian governor should be appointed. He said that he was not sure whether the Ottoman Government would agree to appoint

one, and thought that, in any case, it would be better that this official should be one approved by all the Powers.

I gather Italian Government were anxious to secure serious, but not unreasonable, guarantees as to the islands. It is clear to me that Italy has become aware that she cannot dream of keeping them.

My Russian colleague remarked that he had no doubt that Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs was in full agreement with your views on the subject of islands. French chargé d'affaires, who had heard that [four groups undecypherable] acquiesce generally, but offered no suggestion.

[42378] No. 37.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 9.)

(No. 444.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, October 9,* 1912.

VICE-CONSUL at Samos reported on 8th October that Russian man-of-war had just arrived.

[42401] No. 38.

Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 9.)

(No. 358.)
(Telegraphic.) R. *St. Petersburgh, October 9,* 1912.

YOUR telegram No. 1000 of 8th October.

Instructions will be sent to Russian Ambassador at Constantinople to act in concert with his colleagues when they are similarly instructed.

[42528] No. 39.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir F. Bertie.

(No. 541.)
(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, October 9,* 1912.

ÆGEAN islands.

The French Ambassador communicated to-day a telegram from M. Poincaré suggesting that, as peace would probably shortly be made between Turkey and Italy, it would be opportune for the Powers to say in a friendly way at Rome that they do not doubt "que l'Italie donnera, par avance, communication de tout accord qui pourrait intervenir entre le Gouvernement italien et la Sublime Porte sur la restitution des îles Égéennes et sur le statut politique et sur le régime administratif de l'Archipel ottoman."

M. Poincaré thinks that the step should be taken as soon as possible, and that the step should be identic and simultaneous. I understand that he is applying to all the Powers.

I will agree if the other Powers do so, as, in the view of His Majesty's Government, the destiny of the islands concerns all the Powers.

(Repeated to Berlin, No. 265; Constantinople, No. 756; Rome, No. 393; St. Petersburgh, No. 1012; and Vienna, No. 259.)

[42149] No. 40.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Lowther.

(No. 476.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, October 9,* 1912.

THE Turkish Ambassador informed Sir A. Nicolson on the 5th October that M. Segoulis had proclaimed a revolutionary Government at Samos, and that

consequently the Prince Governor felt that he would not be safe if the Turkish troops were to leave. The Porte would like to know whether the foreign force was sufficient to preserve order and security, as otherwise it might be difficult to withdraw the troops.

Sir A. Nicolson said he took note of the communication.

I am, &c.
E. GREY.

[42552] No. 41.

Sir F. Bertie to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 10.)

(No. 162.)
(Telegraphic.) *Paris, October 10, 1912.*

YOUR telegram No. 541 of 9th October.

I have informed French Minister for Foreign Affairs this evening of your willingness to make a communication to Italian Government on the subject of Ægean islands if other Powers will also do so.

Austro-Hungarian Government is unwilling to make such a communication to its Italian ally, and the German Government will probably also decline.

Minister for Foreign Affairs fears that in the terms of peace between Italy and Turkey Italy will make stipulation in favour of Greek inhabitants of islands and constitute herself as a kind of protectress of their liberties, which is a position which she ought not to arrogate to herself. He has spoken in a general way to the Italian Ambassador to the effect that fate of islands is a European question and not an Italo-Turkish one. He thinks that it would be advisable for France, England, and Russia to point this out in a friendly way to the Italian Government, notwithstanding that Germany as well as Austria-Hungary may refrain from doing so.

[42612] No. 42.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 10.)

(No. 448.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, October 10, 1912.*

FOLLOWING from consular officer at Smyrna to-day:—

"Vice-consul at Samos telegraphs that, Prince being unable to enforce his authority, the revolutionary leader will form Provisional Government until the reforms as to appointment of governors and reorganisation of gendarmerie come into force."

[42534] No. 43.

Earl Granville to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 10.)

(No. 129.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Berlin, October 10, 1912.*

TRIPOLI.

With reference to your telegram No. 541 of yesterday's date to Paris:

The day before yesterday similar instructions were received by French Ambassador, but latter telegraphed to his Government that Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs, with whom he had discussed the question, had stated that Italian Government would consider the proposed identic step as an unfriendly act, and that he would therefore refuse to join in such action. M. Cambon telegraphed further that were the proposal to be addressed to the German Government, it would give them an opportunity, while refusing, to point out to Italy that they had been instrumental in saving her from an unfriendly act on the part of the Western Powers.

The above is very confidential.

[42601] No. 44.

Tewfik Pasha to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 11.)

Ambassade Impériale ottomane, Londres, le 10 octobre, 1912.

Chère Excellence,

A LA suite de notre conversation d'aujourd'hui sur la situation de Samos, je viens de recevoir un nouveau télégramme de Constantinople qui dépeint la situation dans l'île depuis le départ des troupes ottomanes, sous un jour très sombre. Le retrait des troupes a eu pour résultat d'enhardir Sofoulis et ses partisans, qui se livrent à des manifestations bruyantes compromettant gravement l'autorité et la sécurité du Prince et de nos fonctionnaires locaux.

Je m'empresse de vous envoyer, ci-inclus, copie de ce télégramme, en exprimant derechef l'espoir que le Gouvernement de Sa Majesté britannique, appréciant la situation réelle telle qu'elle est et telle qu'elle découle par suite du retrait de nos troupes, mesure qui a été prise par le Gouvernement Impérial simplement dans son désir d'aplanir les difficultés et d'enlever tout prétexte de plainte aux Samiens, voudra bien donner au commandant du détachement anglais les instructions qu'il jugera nécessaires et efficaces pour arrêter l'expansion du mouvement révolutionnaire, qui ne semble possible que par l'expulsion de Samos de Sofoulis et de ses acolytes.

Je saisis, &c.
TEWFIK.

Enclosure in No. 44.

Telegram received by Tewfik Pasha from Sublime Porte.

LE Prince de Samos ainsi que la commission d'enquête envoyée dernièrement nous télégraphient que Sofoulis et ses acolytes, arrivés à Vathy, se sont livrés à des manifestations pour exprimer leur satisfaction à cause du retrait des troupes ottomanes. Les membres du Conseil administratif de l'île, qui jusqu'à présent n'avaient pas obéi à Sofoulis, ont déclaré à la suite du départ de nos troupes de ne pouvoir entrer en relations officielles avec le Prince ni les fonctionnaires ottomans. Dans une proclamation, Sofoulis et les membres du conseil ont annoncé qu'une assemblée extraordinaire se réunirait bientôt à l'effet d'élaborer une loi constitutionnelle pour être soumise à l'approbation des Puissances.

Le Prince affirme catégoriquement que, la situation étant très critique, si Sofoulis et ses acolytes ne sont pas expulsés de suite, la révolution générale est inévitable, et la vie du Prince ainsi que des fonctionnaires ottomans sont en danger. Malgré nos démarches réitérées, la situation critique créée dans l'île par une poignée de révolutionnaires n'a pas été prise suffisamment au sérieux par les Puissances. Je prie votre Altesse de vouloir bien porter sans perte de temps ce qui précède à la connaissance de son Excellence le Ministre des Affaires Etrangères, et insister auprès de lui pour que le commandant du navire de guerre soit muni télégraphiquement d'instructions catégoriques, soit pour procéder à l'expulsion de Sofoulis, soit pour prendre des mesures afin de mettre un terme aux agissements des révolutionnaires et de rétablir l'ordre et l'autorité du Prince dans le pays.

Veuillez ajouter que, devant cette situation, nous nous sentons obligés de débarquer à nouveau dans l'île des troupes suffisantes pour remédier au désordre qui y règne.

Sublime Porte, le 10 octobre, 1912.

[42604] No. 45.

Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 11.)

(No. 361.)
(Telegraphic.) *St. Petersburgh, October 10, 1912.*

YOUR telegram No. 541 of 9th October to Paris.

Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs told me that French Ambassador at Berlin had informed him of French Minister for Foreign Affairs' proposal, but he had not given him a definite reply.

His Excellency considers such a step as that proposed would annoy Italy. It is

not, in his opinion, necessary, as Turkey is not likely to grant any far-reaching privileges to the islands.

I said that it was impossible to say what Turkey might not do in order to bring war to an end under present circumstances.

His Excellency replied that he would raise no objection if one or two of the Powers, like France and England, were to speak to Italy, but that he was opposed to anything that savoured of collective action.

[42888] No. 46.

Consul-General Cumberbatch to Sir G. Lowther.—(Received at Foreign Office October 14.)

(No. 60.)

Sir, *Beirout, September* 28, 1912.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 52 of the 30th ultimo, reporting on the disturbances and agitation amongst Druses and Maronites in Mount Lebanon, I have the honour to report that the restored peace was considerably endangered last week by a dastardly attempt on the life of Nejm Effendi Abou Izzedeen, the venerable Druse member of the court of Metn, and head of one of the most respectable Druse families residing at Abadieh, the centre of the previous disturbances.

On the 18th instant Nejm Effendi was riding from Bhanes to his summer lodging at Brumana, and when nearing the latter village he was shot in the back by a Maronite, who took to flight, after firing several times at the judge, who, fortunately, was not fatally wounded, and who managed to get to Brumana, from whence he was taken to Beirout for medical treatment, as a bullet had lodged in his back.

On hearing of the crime early the next morning, I immediately telegraphed to the acting governor, urging immediate steps being taken for the arrest of the culprit and his accomplices, as information had reached me that the Druses in the Metn were preparing to avenge their venerated judge.

In the meantime I sent a special messenger with a letter to the Druse Sheikh of Abadieh, calling upon him to calm his people and prevent them from assuming a hostile attitude towards their Christian neighbours, a deputation from whom had called on me to express their fear of retaliation on the part of the Druses.

Having received a reply from the acting governor that he had taken immediate steps to pursue the suspected men and to prevent disorders, I was able to calm the Maronites, who were preparing to defend themselves against a possible attack of the Druses.

The next day I called on Nejm Effendi, who had been conveyed to his house at Abadieh, where I found many Druses from all parts of the Lebanon assembled to condole with him. I was able to inform them that over fifteen arrests had been made and that the authorities were acting most promptly in the matter; this satisfied them, and they promised to remain quiet. I was also able to mention the receipt by me of letters from Nessib Bey Djumblatt, the leading Druse chief, and from Sheikh Said Hamdan, the senior Druse judge in the Lebanon, expressing their thanks for the action taken by me in the matter, which also helped to quiet them.

Yesterday I received a visit from Emir Kabelan Bellamah, who informed me that he had two days ago received a telegram from the Grand Vizier instructing him to take over the duties from Snadallah Bey Hoyek, as reported in my telegram No. 39 of yesterday's date.

In consultation with me, he has decided to distribute a special force of gendarmes under a competent officer in the disturbed district to prevent troubles should another murder be attempted on one side or the other.

I have, &c.
H. A. CUMBERBATCH.

[42881] No. 47.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 14.)

(No. 829.)

Sir, *Constantinople, October* 7, 1912.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 540 of the 24th June, I have the honour to forward herewith a despatch from His Majesty's consul at Bussorah, reporting on the

steam trials of the steam-ship "Julnar," carried out successfully up and down the river, without opposition.

I have, &c.
GERARD LOWTHER.

Enclosure in No. 47.

Consul Crow to Mr. Marling.

(No. 44.)

Sir, *Bussorah, September* 11, 1912.

WITH reference to my telegram No. 76 of the 23rd June and Sir Gerard Lowther's despatch No. 540 of the 24th June last to the Foreign Office, I have the honour to report that, at the request of Messrs. Lynch Brothers, I informed the acting vali on the 27th August last that the steam-ship "Julnar" would be withdrawn from the Bagdad service for repair and fresh trials at the end of August, and would be replaced by the steam-ship "Blosse Lynch."

I am now informed by Messrs. Lynch Brothers' engineer that the trials of the "Julnar" with two loaded barges were successfully carried out on the 8th and 9th September without any opposition on the part of the local authorities. The trials lasted twenty-four hours, and the vessel proceeded first from Bussorah to Kelebia and back about 12 miles up-river, and then from Bussorah to Abadan and back, and, finally, from Bussorah half way to Kurna, about 20 miles up-river, and back.

I regard this as satisfactory, in so far as steam trials have taken place without opposition in spite of the categoric refusal of the vali to allow them on a previous occasion, and the result, at all events up to the present, seems to justify the course advocated in the despatch of His Majesty's Ambassador.

I have, &c.
F. E. CROW.

[42885] No. 48.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 21.)

(No. 833.)

Sir, *Constantinople, October* 8, 1912.

WITH reference to Mr. Marling's despatch, No. 768 of the 10th September, I have the honour to forward herewith a despatch from His Majesty's consul at Bussorah transmitting statement concerning land near Maghil hired and purchased by the Bagdad Railway Company, together with two plans and a rough diagram.

I have, &c.
GERARD LOWTHER.

Enclosure 1 in No. 48.

Consul Crow to Mr. Marling.

(No. 46.)

Sir, *Bussorah, September* 14, 1912.

AS instructed in your telegrams, Nos. 50 and 51 of the 8th and 11th September, I have the honour to transmit herewith a statement concerning the land recently hired and purchased near Maghil by the Bagdad Railway Company as a dépôt for railway material in transit, together with two plans, one of the river from Bussorah to Kurna, showing the relative positions of Maghil, the German depôt, and Bussorah, adapted from Colonel Chesney's map on a scale of ½ of an inch to 1 mile, and the other, a rough diagram, showing the site of the depôt and adjacent properties.

I am endeavouring to procure a plan to scale of the German property from their engineer, M. Banke, but I have not yet succeeded in doing so. I trust, however, that the rough plans sent will obtain the essential particulars required.

I have, &c.
F. E. CROW.

P.S.—I have just received from the Commander of the R.I.M.S. "Comet" a tracing of a portion of the river chart, Bagdad to Bussorah, prepared by Lieutenants-Commanders Gardner and Hamilton, of the Royal Indian Marine. As this chart is on a somewhat larger scale than my map of the river, I forward a copy taken from the tracing of the section of the river from Maghil and Bussorah, on which I have marked the Bagdad Railway material depôt in red ink.

F. E. C.

Enclosure 2 in No. 48.

Statement by Consul Crow.

THE land purchased by the Bagdad Railway Company near Maghil for a depôt for railway material lies on the right bank of the Shatt-el-Arab, about 4 miles above Bussorah, and about a ¼ of a-mile below Messrs. Lynch Brothers dock at Maghil. It lies parallel to the river, but does not reach to the water or the river bank. The piece of land intervening, which forms the river frontage, belongs to the Turkish Government, and has a small creek at its southern end, formerly used as a dock by the Turkish Marine Department. The Germans have hired a portion of this strip of river frontage to the extent of about 220 yards (200 metres) long by 50 yards wide, in order to gain an approach to the river from which they would otherwise be cut off.

The land purchased is about 17½ jereebs, approximately 17½ acres. The Germans brought the freehold from the Zoheyr family for £ T. 2,200. It is to be registered in the name of one of their native employés, an Ottoman subject, as the Turks raised objections to registering it in the name of Meissner Pasha or any other German. The strip of river frontage is about 1½ jereebs, approximately 1½ acres. It is hired from the Turkish Government for 5 years with, I understand, the option of renewal at a yearly rental of £ T. 50.

I believe this information to be correct. It is derived from the engineer of the Bagdad Railway, Herr Fritz Banke, who is in charge of the depôt, and M. Krumpeter, representative of the German firm of Messrs. R. Wönckhaus and Co., agents of the Hamburg American line, and confirmed by my Russian colleagues.

F. E. CROW.

Bussorah, September 11, 1912.

[42889] No. 49.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 14.)

(No. 837.)

Sir, *Constantinople, October* 9, 1912.

WITH reference to Mr. Marling's despatch No. 821 of the 2nd instant, I have the honour to forward to you herewith copy of a despatch from His Majesty's consul-general at Smyrna relative to the course of events at Samos up to the end of last month.

I have, &c.

GERARD LOWTHER.

Enclosure 1 in No. 49.

Consul-General Barnham to Mr. Marling.

(No. 116.)

Sir, *Smyrna, October* 1, 1912.

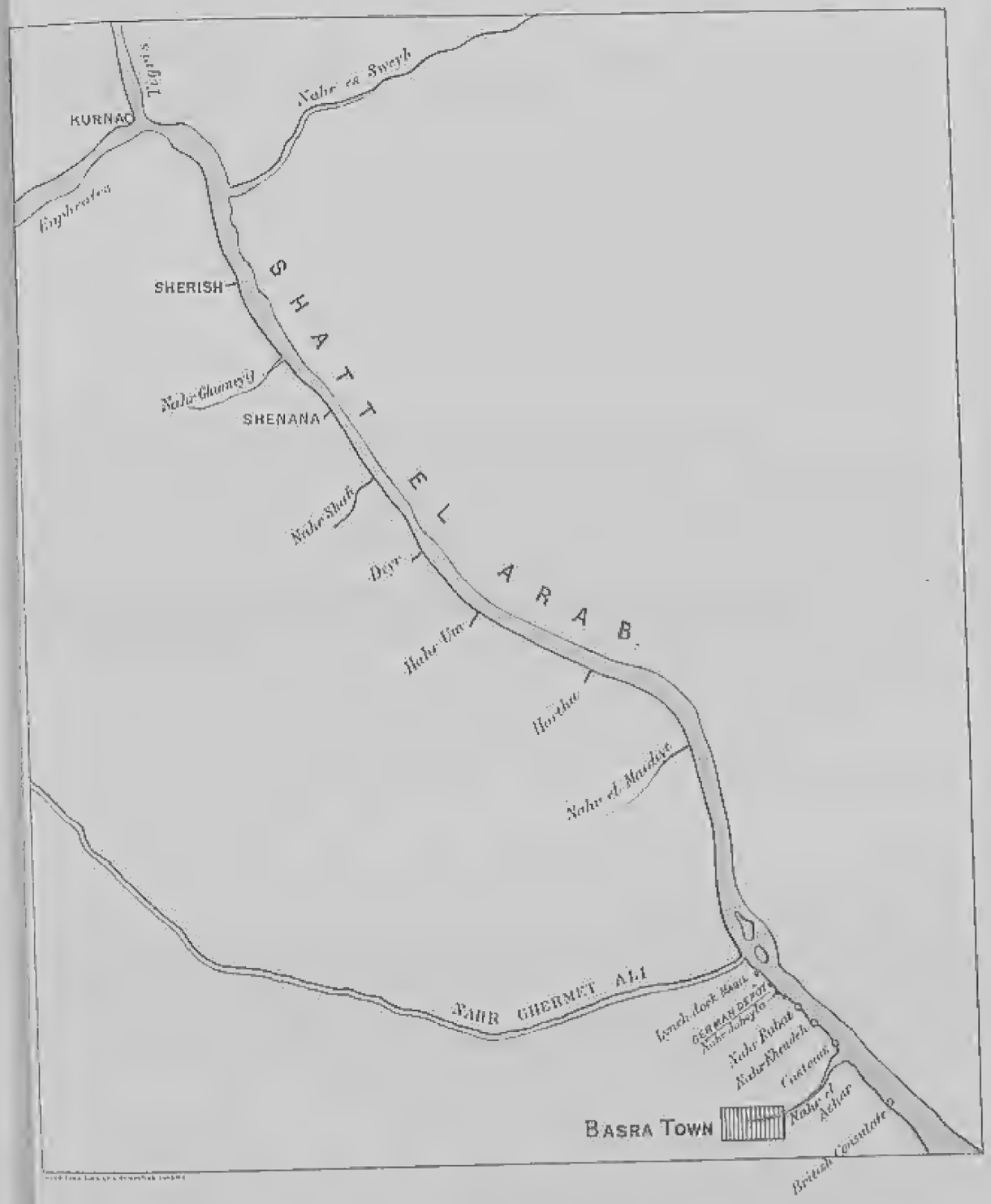
I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith copies of two despatches from Mr. Vice-Consul Marc, reporting the arrival of Turkish troops from the mainland and other events in Samos.

Sir Alfred Biliotti reports that Samian refugees were not allowed to land at some of the Sporades Islands, but that General Ameglio, on hearing of this, ordered that a limited number should be permitted to land, and an Italian destroyer had been sent to watch events at Samos.

I have, &c.

HENRY D. BARNHAM.

PLAN SHOWING SHATT EL ARAB FROM KURNA TO BASRA, AND RESPECTIVE POSITIONS APPROXIMATELY OF LYNCH DOCK AT MAGIL, THE BAGDAD RAILWAY MATERIAL DEPOT, AND THE TOWN OF BASRA.



PLACES ARE MARKED APPROXIMATELY.

BASRA, SEPT. 9TH, 1912.

(Sgd.) F. E. Crow
H. M.'s Consul.

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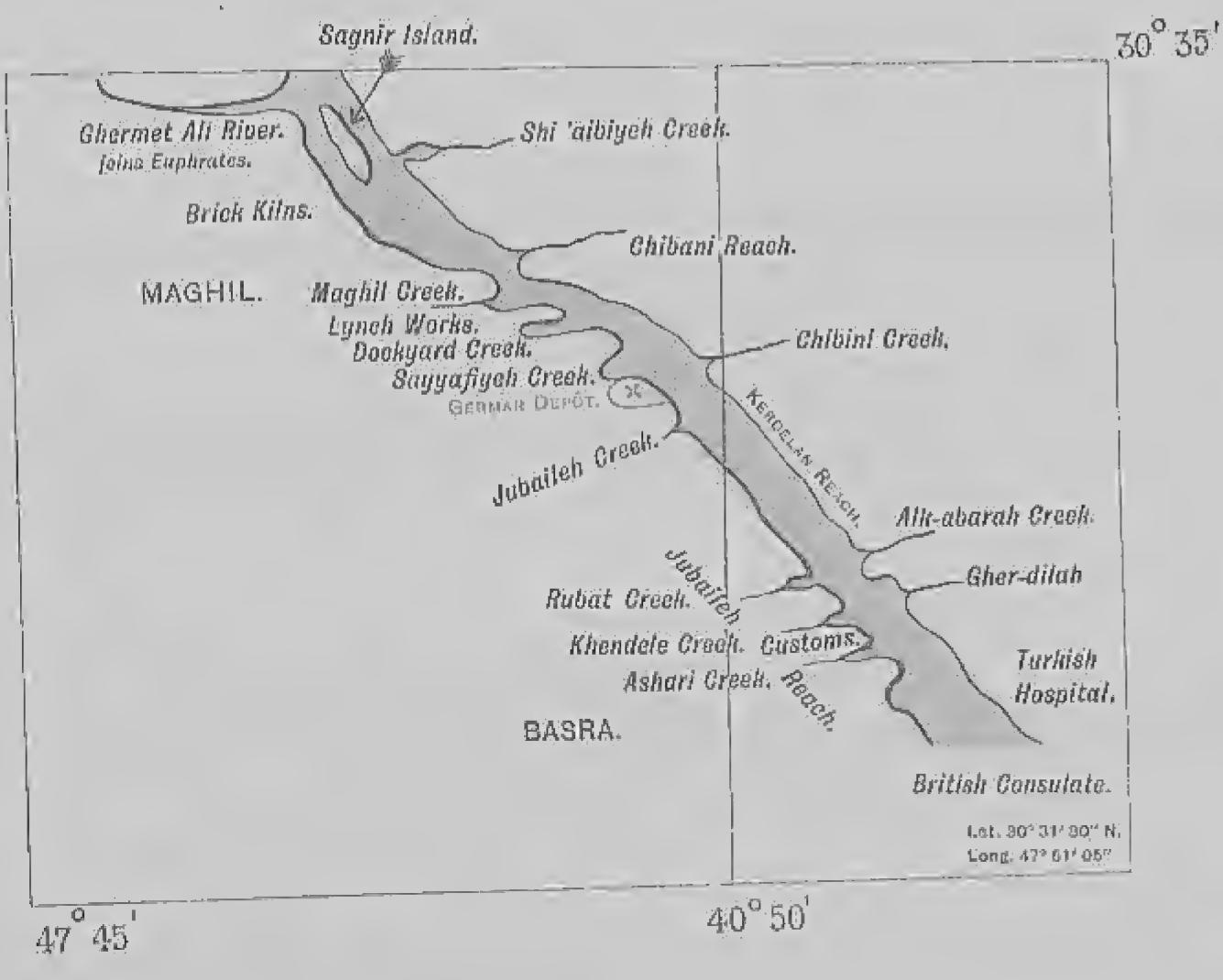
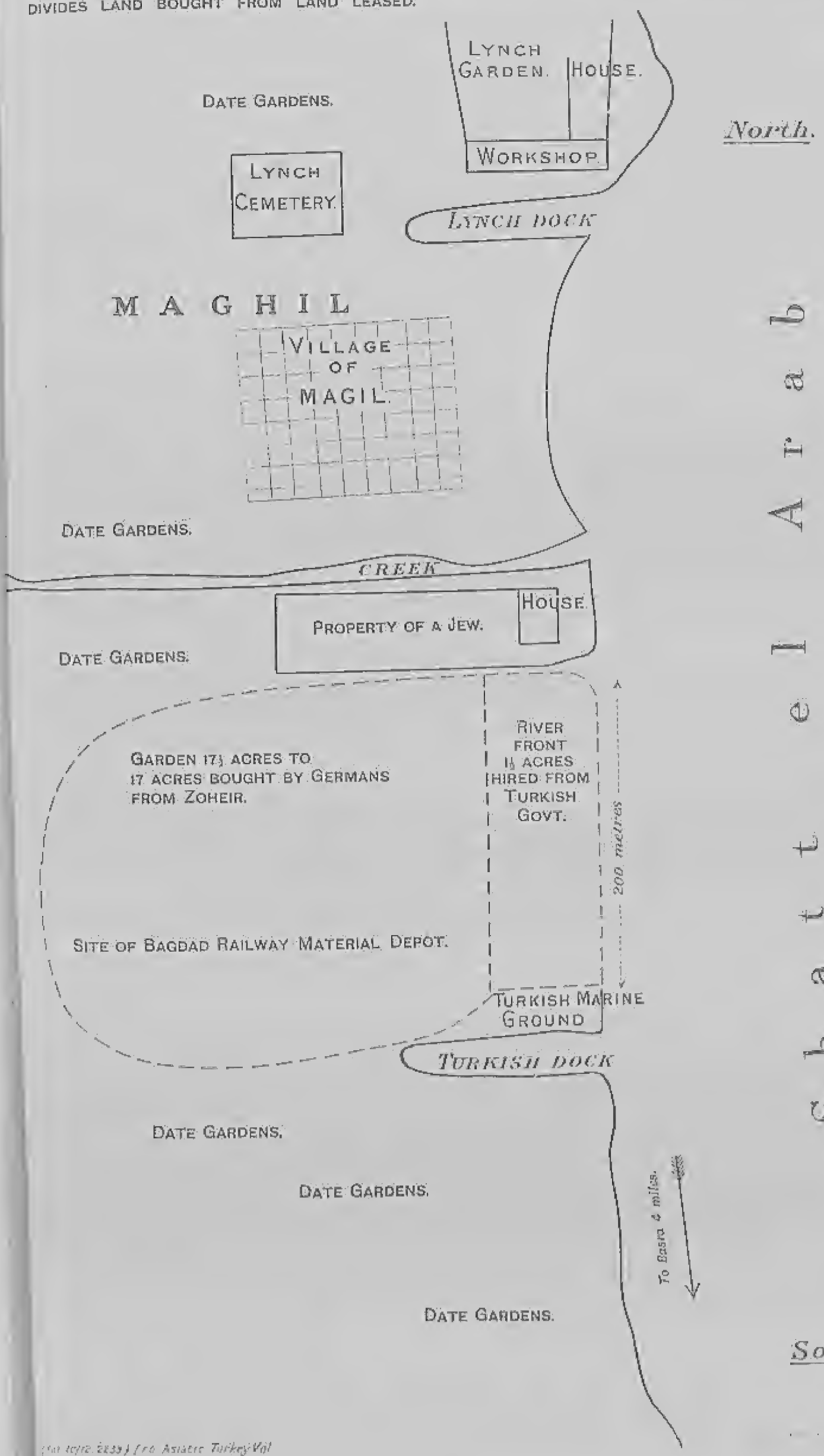
COPY FROM A TRACING OF A PORTION OF THE CHART OF THE SHATT EL ARAB-MAGHIL TO BASRA, SUPPLIED BY LIEUTENANT-COMMANDER CAMPBELL OF THE R.I.M.S. "COMET," ON WHICH I HAVE MARKED THE BAGDAD RAILWAY MATERIAL DEPÔT IN RED INK.



ROUGH PLAN SHOWING RELATIVE POSITION OF BAGDAD RAILWAY MATERIAL DEPÔT AND ADJACENT PROPERTIES. GERMAN PROPERTY SURROUNDED BY RED DOTTED LINE; LINE DIVIDES LAND BOUGHT FROM LAND LEASED.



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Enclosure 2 in No. 49.

Vice-Consul Mure to Mr. Marling.

Samos, September 28, 1912.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to confirm my last despatch, dated the 25th instant, and to report to you as follows:—

The continuous firing in the town from all the elevated positions greatly endangered the lives of foreign residents and non-combatants.

With a view to stopping this firing Captain Delage, the commander of the French man-of-war, and Captain Keane, commander of His Majesty's ship "Medea," interviewed the Prince-Governor, and a letter was sent to the Turkish commander requesting him to stop firing on the town. A proclamation was then issued by the local authorities ordering the Samians to stop firing also at the Turks from their houses.

From Captain Delage's action, I understand that he had authority to restore order in Vathy. Accordingly, he took all measures to assure the safe resumption of municipal affairs, *i.e.*, the authorities in carrying out their duty in the supply of water, food, light, &c.

He has also arranged, together with Captain Keane, to form for the protection of all foreign residents a neutral zone. This was arranged, and nearly all the inhabitants of Upper and Lower Vathy were brought in. The area of this neutral zone is now patrolled by French and English sailors. The French have further occupied the telegraph office and the Senate House, and have established there a sort of police to look after all complaints.

They do not allow Turks to come down in the neutral zone, nor any armed Samian. Any Turk desiring to come in the town must have the permission of the French officer in command and accompanied by escort.

At the initiative of Captain Delage, who invited the Prince and Sofoulis on board his ship, a suspension of hostilities was agreed to for five days, from sunset, the 26th September. Under the circumstances, and in order to avoid bloodshed, the suspension of hostilities was a measure of great necessity.

A reinforcement of about 500 Turkish troops with 2 guns, including many irregulars (it is said Turkish Cretans), arrived from the mainland during the last few days. These reinforcements looted the village of Paleocastro, situated half-an-hour from Vathy, as well as other houses in the vicinity of the capital, including my country house at Vlamary. They have also violated two girls and have killed their father. Had the ships not been here undoubtedly there would have been an indiscriminate massacre of the inhabitants.

The general situation at present is as follows:—

Both parties are holding their positions. The troops now number at least 1,000, with 5 guns, while the insurgents do not exceed that number. The Italian men-of-war which were always cruising off the island are not to be seen at present. It appears they do not intend to stop further reinforcements.

I beg to transmit to you herewith three documents on the situation addressed to me, the French consul, and the commanders of the men-of-war by different local authorities.

His Majesty's ship "Diana" is expected to-morrow morning to replace His Majesty's ship "Medea" for a few days; she is going to Suda Bay for coal.

I have, &c.

GREGORY D. L. MARC.

Enclosure 3 in No. 49.

Commission of Tigani to Captain of "Medea."

(Translation.)

Vathy, September 13 (26), 1912.

THE people of the parish of Tigani have the honour to request you warmly, through their representatives, to be good enough to take measures for the protection of the lives and properties of the inhabitants of our parish, which, owing to the successful landing of the Turkish troops at Moulaibrahim, runs serious risk, especially from irregular hordes, which we learn with certainty are ready to land on our coast from the

mainland (Asia Minor) for raid and spoil, and in which they will succeed, seeing that most of the inhabitants have left for other parts through fear, and thus we who are left will not be able to oppose them. One vessel, be it even a small steam-boat, with a detachment of sailors, would be able to prevent all danger to the inhabitants, whose gratitude will be endless.

Our parish undertakes most willingly the expenses of accommodation and the general care of the said detachment. Hoping that you will respond to our request, we beg you, Messieurs les commandants, to accept our deepest gratitude and our warmest thanks in anticipation.

(Seven signatures.)
Commission of Tigani.

Enclosure 4 in No. 49.

Mayor and Councillors of Mavradjia to Captain of "Medea."

(Translation.)
Excellency, *Samos, September* 13 (26), 1912.

A VERY great number of innocent women and children have been assembled in our parish, and, seized with panic, abandoned their homes.

As it is possible that an attack may be made and innocent lives may suffer, we place ourselves under the shelter of your Excellency as representing your august Government, and warmly request you to be good enough to take care of their safety.

We sign, &c.
CONSTANTINE G. CHARITON,
Mayor of Mavradjia.
(Three other signatures),
Parish Councillors.

Enclosure 5 in No. 49.

Vice-Consul Mayo to Consul-General Barnham.

Sir, *Samos, September* 29, 1912.

I HAVE the honour to inform you that I have omitted to make reference in my last despatch, dated the 28th instant, that according to the admiral's orders to the commander of His Majesty's ship "Medea," all consulates are to be protected. A guard was therefore placed, at the request of the Belgian and Greek consuls, during the night only at their respective consulates, and also one at Mr. H. Wilkin's house.

These guards and the one at the British consulate were withdrawn by the commander at the cessation of hostilities. Only the area of the neutral zone is patrolled by British and French sailors.

Three houses belonging to British subjects at some distance on the south of the harbour have not been included in the neutral zone.

I have seen, however, Captain Delage on this question, and he promised me to extend the zone to these houses, though in a very exposed position.

The situation is at present quiet at Vathy.

His Majesty's ship "Diana" arrived this morning. The commander has just visited the Prince, accompanied by me.

I have, &c.
GREGORY D. L. MAYO.

[42899] No. 50.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 14.)

(No. 847.)
Sir, *Constantinople, October* 9, 1912.

WITH reference to Mr. Marling's despatch No. 808 of the 24th ultimo, I have the honour to report that despatches since received from His Majesty's consular officers confirm the existence of the disorders in Eastern Anatolia which led to the resignation of the Armenian Patriarch. Some attempt seems, however, to have been made to bring the Kurdish brigands to book, and a telegram was published here by the Agence

ottomane on 26th September to the effect that a detachment of the Imperial troops from Van, while engaged in pursuing them, was ambushed by a band under the command of the notorious Said Bey, and lost an officer and ten men.

On the 27th instant the Armenian National Assembly held a meeting, and, after the election of four members of the Synod to replace those who had resigned with the Patriarch, proceeded to appoint a commission to examine the cases of outrages on their co-religionists in the Anatolian vilayets. The President of the Assembly then read aloud the recent telegrams received at the Patriarchate, enumerating the outrages in question, *e.g.*: (1) a telegram from the Metropolitan of Seert, dated 20th ultimo, reporting an attack by Kurds on the Armenian village of Azime and the various cases of murder and violation committed in that neighbourhood; (2) one from the Bishop of Karafillisse relative to the rape of an Armenian girl by a Moslem; (3) three murders at Adana; (4) a report from Erzindjan relative to the forcible conversion of Armenian recruits to Islamism, &c.

The British acting vice-consul at Bitlis reports that during the month of August and the first half of September murders by Kurds and lifting of cattle and sheep by them were frequent in his district, and the perpetrators of these crimes do not seem to have been brought to justice.

Mr. Monahan, writing on the 23rd ultimo, reported that the vilayet of Erzeroum, though much quieter than those of Van and Bitlis, was likewise somewhat disturbed, and among the outrages mentioned by him are several cases of highway robbery and murder, some of which seem to have been committed by Kurds on Kurds or other Moslems. This would seem to point more to a state of general insecurity than to anti-Armenian feeling.

On the 20th ultimo a meeting was organised at Erzeroum, and, after listening to a speech by the Armenian Tashnakist, ex-deputy for Van, telegrams of protest against the position of Armenians and demands for reforms were dispatched to the Grand Vizier and to the Patriarchate, and a few days afterwards a telegram was sent by the Armenian Lay Council of Erzeroum, of which the majority are Tashnakists, to the Patriarchate, stating that the recent robberies in the Erzeroum vilayet were causing anxiety, which was increased by the continued robberies and murders in the vilayets of Van and Bitlis.

Mr. Monahan seems to be of opinion, however, that the insecurity in the Erzeroum vilayet itself is hardly sufficient reason for the above action of the local Armenians. The grave fact seems to him to be that hitherto the Moslem robbers, murderers, and ravishers who commit crimes in the open country in the vilayets of Erzeroum, Van, Bitlis, and Diarbekir are never caught.

The situation at Van shows no signs of improval as yet, and the notorious brigands, Mir Mahé and Said Bey, are still at large, though the measures taken by the Cabinet in dismissing the Vali of Van seem to have been welcomed by the local Armenians.

The French consul there, who had just returned from a tour in the vilayets of Van and Bitlis, reported to his embassy on the 1st instant that in the last two months the number of crimes had increased 50 per cent.; that while the Armenians of Van itself were calm, though anxious, the Armenian peasants were in such a state of alarm that they hardly dared work in the fields; that the incapacity of certain of the agents employed to pursue the brigands was shown by a recent incident at Gavache, when three armed Armenians were mistaken for brigands and shot down, and that the only way to intimidate the Kurds would seem to be the capture and execution of such men as Mir Mahé, Mihó, and Said Bey.

It is to be hoped that the energetic new valis appointed by the present Cabinet, with stringent instructions to restore order and punish the guilty in the troubled vilayets of Van and Bitlis, will be successful in their task.

It is, however, possible that their difficulties will be increased by the present political and international situation and the telegrams recently published here by the Agence ottomane reporting the ill-treatment and murders of Moslems in Bulgaria, though categorically denied by the Bulgarian Telegraphic Agency, added to other reports that the Armenians in Bulgaria have formed a committee to gather funds and enlist recruits—forty of those already enlisted being described as foreign subjects—for the Bulgarian army may well be expected to increase rather than to diminish the animosity against Armenians in the outlying provinces of the Empire.

I have, &c.
GERARD LOWTHER.

[42903] No. 51.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 14.)

(No. 851.)
Sir, *Constantinople, October* 10, 1912.

WITH reference to your telegram No. 527 to Sir F. Bertie, I have the honour to inform you that, after consulting with my French and Russian colleagues, I have instructed His Majesty's consul-general at Smyrna to arrange with his French and Russian colleagues, when similarly instructed, to proceed to Samos to examine the situation there and to make such recommendations as appear desirable for restoring a condition of affairs in conformity with the statute.

I have, &c.
GERARD LOWTHER.

[42612] No. 52.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Lowther.

(No. 785.)
(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, October* 14, 1912.

YOUR telegram No. 448 of 10th October: Samos.

Consuls-general should be instructed in sense of my telegram No. 527 to Sir F. Bertie of 8th October (No. 1000 to Sir G. Buchanan). You should concert with your colleagues on this point, and also as to whether consuls-general should not reinforce their warning to M. Sofoulis by adding that such proceedings as those described in your above-mentioned telegram are calculated to provoke the return of the Turkish troops, in which case he, M. Sofoulis, will be responsible for the consequences. I have received a communication from the Turkish Ambassador, transmitting copy of a telegram to his Highness from the Turkish Government, in which this step is threatened.

(Repeated to Paris, No. 575, and St. Petersburgh, No. 1040.)

[42612] No. 53.

*Sir Edward Grey to Sir F. Bertie.**

(No. 577.)
(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, October* 14, 1912.

MY telegram No. 785 A of 14th October to Sir G. Lowther: Samos.

You should inform Government to which you are accredited that, in view of Sir G. Lowther's telegram No. 448 of 10th October, I am authorising Sir G. Lowther to instruct consul-general in sense of my telegram to you No. 527* of 8th October. You should also propose that the consuls-general should be instructed to to reinforce their warning to M. Sofoulis in sense of my telegram to Sir G. Lowther above referred to, and, if French (Russian) Government concur, request them to instruct their representative at Constantinople accordingly.

(Repeated to Constantinople, No. 787.)

[42295] No. 54.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Lowther.

(No. 786.)
(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, October* 14, 1912.

MY telegram No. 785 of 14th October: Samos.

French Ambassador informs me that, according to French Ambassador at Constantinople, Russian consul-general at Smyrna has approached his French colleague with a project for the eventual modification of the Samian organic statute of 1832. The points enumerated bear resemblance to those mentioned as demanded by Samians themselves in vice-consul at Samos's despatch transmitted in your Excellency's despatch No. 759 of 10th September. French Ambassador enquires if British consul-general has been similarly approached, and, if so, what are views of His Majesty's Government.

The demands in themselves are not unreasonable.

* Also to Sir G. Buchanan (No. 1042).

[43565] No. 54 A.

Commander-in-chief, Mediterranean, to Admiralty.—(Communicated to Foreign Office, October 15.)

(Telegraphic.) P. *October 14, 1912.*

"MEDEA" telegraphs:—

"Prince of Samos and consuls-general issuing a joint proclamation.

"Am I to comply, in view of my orders, with request from consul-general to land eight armed men to safeguard its posting? Instructions requested as to further requests which may be made."

I replied:—

"Do not comply. Your orders are that you shall not interfere with internal affairs of the island."

Would it, in your opinion, be advisable that three consuls-general, in view of possibility of similar demands being put forward during their visit to Samos, should be instructed to reply, if necessary, that the moment for entertaining such proposals, while war is still in progress, is not suitable; that if the Samians remain quiet and do not follow political adventures in attempting to disturb *status quo*, the consuls-general may be disposed to forward the programme to their Governments; but that the introduction of any reforms depends upon the consent of the Porte, and that if the Samians revolt now they may forfeit the advocacy of the Powers, as well as losing the favoured position that they have hitherto enjoyed by provoking the return of the Turkish troops?

(Repeated to Paris, No. 576, and St. Petersburgh, No. 1041.)

[43403] No. 55.

Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 15.)

(No. 371.)
(Telegraphic.) *St. Petersburgh, October 15, 1912.*

PARIS telegram No. 162 of 10th October.

Minister for Foreign Affairs is still averse to making any representations to Italy. He says that treaty of peace will either be signed to-morrow, in which case it will be too late, or the negotiations will be broken off and the war resumed. He believes that clause in the treaty dealing with the islands is quite harmless, and only provides for the appointment of Christian Governors-General, coupled with assurances for the good treatment of the islanders.

[43321] No. 56.

Consul-General Barnham to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 15.)

(Telegraphic.) *Samos, October 15, 1912.*

IT would greatly strengthen my hands if whenever my colleagues and myself see urgent necessity to land armed men, His Majesty's ship "Medea" could be authorised to associate herself with the landing of men by French and Russian ships.

[43365] No. 57.

Sir Edward Grey to Consul-General Barnham.

(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, October 15, 1912.*

ADMIRALTY state you have requested landing of eight armed men for purpose of safeguarding posting of proclamation issued jointly by Prince of Samos with yourself and your French and Russian colleagues.

Please telegraph nature of this proclamation.

[41428] No. 58.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Louther.

(No. 484.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, October 15, 1912.*

WITH reference to your Excellency's dispatch No. 551 of the 25th June last, respecting tenders for work in connection with the Mesopotamian irrigation scheme, and the improbability of Sir J. Jackson (Limited) putting in a further tender, I transmit to your Excellency herewith copy of a communication from that firm setting forth their objections to the conditions stipulated by the Turkish Government.*

I have to request your Excellency to point out to the Turkish Government the unfairness of the treatment to which the English firms have been subjected, and to make representations that these firms shall not be placed at a disadvantage in competition.

* No. 10.

Owing, however, to the present state of affairs in Turkey, I leave to your Excellency's discretion the choice of a suitable opportunity for making these representations.

I am, &c.
E. GREY.

[43458] No. 59.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received October 16.)

Sir, *India Office, October 14, 1912.*

WITH reference to your letter dated the 25th July, 1912, regarding the lighthouse depôt on Abadan Island, I am directed by the Secretary of State for India to enclose for the information of the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, copy of the correspondence upon the subject.

I am to suggest that, if Secretary Sir E. Grey sees no objection, the memorandum, of which copy is enclosed, be now communicated to the Anglo-Persian Oil Company.

On learning that this has been done, the Marquis of Crewe would propose, subject to the concurrence of Sir E. Grey, to address to the Government of India the telegram of which a draft is herewith submitted.

The favour of a very early reply is requested.

I am, &c.
LIONEL ABRAHAMS.

Enclosure 1 in No. 59.

The Marquess of Crewe to the Government of India.

(Telegraphic.) P. *India Office, August 2nd, 1912.*

LIGHTHOUSE depôt.

Your telegram dated the 24th June last.

Reference is invited to papers forwarded with letter dated 12th ultimo, from Secretary, Political Department. Offer is made by Anglo-Persian Oil Company of which terms are stated below. Please say whether I shall accept terms Nos. 1 to 4. Papers were sent by mail of 26th ultimo:—

1. Lease to Government of India, for 40 years from 9th May, 1912, at a rental of 1*l.* per annum per acre, of area for depôt up to total of two acres.

2. Execution at actual cost, plus reasonable remuneration, of works referred to in penultimate paragraph of letter dated 25th April, 1912, from Trinity House (estimates to be furnished later for this item).

3. Supply of oil in accordance with specification in letter from Trinity House, dated 25th April, paragraph 9.

4. Erection of tanks referred to in India Office memorandum of 1st ultimo, paragraph 3.

5. Execution of any other building or engineering work in connection with scheme for lighting, &c., that may be required locally.

Enclosure 2 in No. 59.

Government of India to the Marquess of Crewe.

(Telegraphic.) P. *September 20, 1912.*

LIGHTHOUSE depôt.

See your telegram dated the 2nd ultimo.

I agree to conditions being accepted; but before site is decided on I recommend that ground plans showing proposed buildings and connection with landing jetty, should be drawn up for our approval by manager of oil company and commander of "Lawrence" in concert. Reference is invited to my telegram, 24th June, 1912, in regard to the fourth point.

Enclosure 3 in No. 59.

Trinity House to India Office.

Sir, *October 7, 1912.*

WITH reference to your letter of the 6th August last, further relative to the establishment of a lighthouse depôt on the island of Abadan, I am directed to state as follows:—

As regards the request of the Government of India, referred to in the second paragraph of your letter under reply, to be furnished with plans and specifications of the work referred to in the penultimate paragraph of my letter of the 25th April last, the Elder Brethren understand that Mr. Homer, one of the engineers in charge of the lighthouses in Burmah, has been appointed to the lighthouse service in the Persian Gulf, and I am to suggest that it would be the better course to refer the matter to him.

He would then confer with the local representatives of the Anglo-Persian Oil Company and arrange with them the best location for the depôt convenient to all parties, and the amount, description, and cost of the accommodation which his experience of lighthouse work in the east leads him to consider to be necessary.

As regards the supply of a 10-ton travelling crane through the Trinity House for erection on the Anglo-Persian Oil Company's wharf at Abadan, competitive tenders have been obtained.

Owing to the narrowness of the gauge of the tramway (3 feet) it was necessary that the crane should be provided with a considerable balance weight, with the result that it is found that the approximate weight of the crane when travelling with its load would not be less than about 50 tons.

It was therefore thought desirable before considering the tenders to consult the company's engineers, who designed the wharf in question, who were informed of the weight.

They state that the weight of the proposed crane with its load is beyond the carrying capacity of the wharf, and it is feared that the cost of the structural alterations necessary to strengthen it sufficiently to bear the load would be prohibitive.

It is therefore suggested that the idea of a travelling crane be abandoned, and that a fixed crane be erected instead on one of the ends of the jetty.

This crane could lift its load of 10 tons from a vessel alongside the wharf, and deposit it on a trolley for conveyance to the buoy yard.

The establishment of this crane would necessitate the construction of a pile foundation at a considerable cost, which work, I would suggest, should be carried out through the Anglo-Persian Oil Company, under the direction of their engineers, who are in possession of all detail drawings and are fully acquainted with the local conditions.

The lowest tender for the travelling crane was 790*l.* (the Trinity House estimate was 800*l.*, and was approved by your department) f.o.b. England.

The estimated cost of a fixed crane, f.o.b. England, is 390*l.*, showing a saving of 400*l.* on the cost of the travelling crane, which amount would be available for the construction of the necessary foundations for the fixed crane.

In either case, a truck for the conveyance of buoys from the pier would be necessary at an estimated cost of 100*l.*

As regards the final paragraph of your letter, relative to the test of oil to be supplied by the Anglo-Persian Oil Company, I am directed to acquaint you that the Elder Brethren will be happy to carry out the necessary trials, &c., therewith, informing you of the results obtained in due course.

I have, &c.
(For Secretary)
H. A. MEASOR.

[43455] No. 60.

Admiralty to Foreign Office.—(Received October 16.)

Sir, *Admiralty, October 15, 1912.*

I AM commanded by my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty to transmit, for the information of the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, paraphrase of a telegram

dated the 15th instant, No. 521 from the Commander-in-chief, Mediterranean, relative to the situation at Samos

I am, &c.
W. GRAHAM GREENE.

Enclosure in No. 60.

Commander-in-chief, Mediterranean, to Admiralty.

(No. 521.)
(Telegraphic.) R. *Malta, October* 15, 1912.

REFERENCE Admiralty telegram No. 232, following report from senior naval officer, Samos:—

"No disturbance threatened, but 'Bruix' has armed men still ashore for police duty."

[43469] No. 61.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 16.)

(No. 478.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, October* 15, 1912.

YOUR telegram No. 786 of 14th October.

I think it advisable to await report of the three consuls before committing ourselves as far as is suggested, which might carry us farther than is desirable. My Russian and French colleagues share this view.

The ultimate settlement of the Samos question may be dependent on the result of the war.

[43403] No. 62.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Buchanan.

(No. 1051.)
(Telegraphic.) R. *Foreign Office, October* 16, 1912.

YOU may inform Minister for Foreign Affairs that, in answer to a question by Italian Ambassador on Monday whether if Turkish troops were withdrawn from Tripoli as a result of a treaty of peace between Turkey and Italy we should recognise Italian sovereignty over Tripoli, I replied that we should have no political objection to doing this, but I added that any change in the future status of Ægean islands was regarded by us as a question for the Powers generally.

[43566] No. 63.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 17.)

(No. 482.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, October* 17, 1912.

FOLLOWING from consul-general now at Samos:—

"Your telegram No. 26.

"It has not been found necessary to communicate with Sofoulis direct, but we are in communication with his intimate friends, from whom we are led to believe that he will listen to reason.

"We have for the moment restored the authority of the Prince here, but he has no authority outside, and the position must remain the same until another Prince has been appointed and the proper gendarmerie formed.

"The people wish that the Prince should be chosen by the protecting Powers, and not have been previously employed in Ottoman service.

"My French colleague has telegraphed to Paris asking for a gendarmerie instructor."

[43691] No. 64.

Consul-General Barnham to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 17.)

(Telegraphic.) *Samos, October* 17, 1912.

PROCLAMATION referred to in your telegram of 15th October was a notification by the Prince, with my assent and that of my colleagues, that in view of the fact that the Prince is still Governor of Samos, his resignation not having been accepted by the Porte, the convocation of a National Assembly with ninety-three members instead of thirty-nine as prescribed by the Organic Statute was illegal.

Proclamation when sent to the printer was confiscated by the rebels. Twenty-five men were landed by the French and eighty by the Russians for the purpose of occupying the printing-office and surrounding the cathedral in which Assembly was about to meet.

Meeting was abandoned, and as situation has since improved guard have been removed.

[43458] No. 65.

Foreign Office to Anglo-Persian Oil Company.

(Confidential.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, October* 19, 1912.

WITH reference to previous correspondence, I am directed by Secretary Sir E. Grey to make the following communication to you:—

1. His Majesty's Government accept the offer of the Anglo-Persian Oil Company to lease to the Government of India the area required for a lighthouse depôt on the island of Abadan, up to a total of two acres, for a period of forty-nine years from the 29th May, 1912, at a rental of 1*l.* per acre.

2. As regards the location of the site, the Government of India have suggested that the commander of the Royal Indian Marine ship "Lawrence" and the manager of the company should draw up in concert, for approval, a ground plan showing the buildings that are required by Government and their connection with the landing jetty. His Majesty's Government support this suggestion, and would be glad if the company will issue the necessary instructions to their local representative.

3. Subject to approval of the estimates, His Majesty's Government accept the offer of the company to carry out the works required in connection with the depôt at actual cost, plus a reasonable remuneration to be settled in such manner as may be agreed hereafter. These were shortly described in the letter from the Trinity House to the India Office, dated the 25th April last, and the company asked in their letter of the 19th July to be supplied with plans and specifications by the Elder Brethren. It has, however, since been suggested by the latter that the question of the plans and specifications should be referred to an officer of the Government of India appointed to deal with the lighthouse service of the Persian Gulf. That Government are being informed of this suggestion, and requested, if they see no objection, to issue the necessary instructions to their officer. His Majesty's Government would be glad if the company's local representative could be instructed to give to him any facilities and information that he may require. They consider it very desirable that all arrangements at the depôt should now be comprehensively investigated on the spot, so that work there may proceed with as little delay as possible.

4. It may be added that the Elder Brethren have recently suggested the substitution for the travelling crane at first proposed of a fixed crane to carry a load of 10 tons, and that they have recommended that a pile foundation should be constructed for it under the direction of the company's engineers. This is a matter that will presumably be investigated by the officer of the Government of India locally.

5. The same applies to the character and capacity of the oil-tanks proposed to be provided.

6. As regards the offer of the company to supply oil for illuminating purposes, the matter will be further considered on the completion of the necessary trials, &c., by the Trinity House.

I am, &c.
LOUIS MALLET.

[44118] No. 66.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 20.)

(No. 493.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, October 19, 1912.*

SAMOS.

My telegram No. 482 of 16th October.

French Ambassador tells me that application for French gendarmerie officer to organise local gendarmerie was made by Prince and Senate. He expressed hope that His Majesty's Government have no objection, and stated that Russian Ambassador agreed. A similar application had already been made to him by Porte last week.

[44294] No. 67.

Sir F. Bertie to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 21.)

(No. 449.)
Sir, *Paris, October 19, 1912.*

WITH reference to my telegram No. 172 of the 16th instant, I have the honour to transmit to you herewith copy of a memorandum from the French Minister for Foreign Affairs giving information received from the French delegate at Samos with regard to events in the island.

I have, &c.
FRANCIS BERTIE.

Enclosure in No. 67.

Memorandum communicated to Sir F. Bertie.

LE Président du Conseil, Ministre des Affaires Étrangères, a l'honneur de remercier son Excellence Sir Francis Bertie de sa note du 15 de ce mois concernant les avertissements à faire donner à M. Sofoulis par les consul généraux français, anglais et russe, délégués à Vathy.

M. Poincaré s'empresse d'informer son Excellence Sir Francis Bertie qu'aux termes d'un télégramme de M. Colonnès, en date du 15 de ce mois, les délégués des trois Puissances ont réussi à rétablir l'autorité du Prince de Samos et à faire proclamer par celui-ci la dissolution de l'Assemblée constituante réunie à l'instigation de M. Sofoulis.

Paris, le 17 octobre, 1912.

[44197] No. 68.

Vice-Consul Hadkinson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 21.)

(Telegraphic.) *Mitylene, October 20, 1912.*

SIX Greek men-of-war are at island of Lemnos, demanding its occupation.

[44446] No. 69.

Sir F. Elliot to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 21.)

(No. 81.)
(Telegraphic.) *Athens, October 21, 1912.*

LEMNOS occupied yesterday without resistance.

[55904] No. 66*.

Colonel Hawker to Sir C. Lowther.—(Communicated to Foreign Office in Constantinople despatch No. 884, October 21.)

Sir, *Smyrna, October 14, 1912.*

NOT having forwarded to your Excellency a communication concerning the gendarmerie for some considerable time, I have the honour to submit the following report.

During the last two months I have visited the islands of Chios and Mytilene, and at both places interviewed all the local authorities, consular officials, and residents, and am pleased to be able to say that this year there are practically no complaints against the gendarmerie, and in fact even the Greeks expressed themselves pleased with the way the work of the gendarmerie had been carried on.

Owing to reports that the Italians were going to occupy Chios and Mytilene the military authorities at these places worked out schemes for the troops and the gendarmerie which were to be carried out in the event of an occupation taking place.

At Chios, where the islanders are divided into two parties, the followers of Convella and those of Canella, the two parties had decided to sink their differences and to select only one candidate for the forthcoming elections, and this oddly enough has had a very good effect, as previously both sides had been trying to make use of the gendarmerie to further their own political aspirations.

As it was found by experience that the original schemes made up by the reorganising officers were not in a good many instances workable, orders had been given for commissions composed of a foreign officer, a Turkish inspector, and the gendarmerie officers in command at the various stations to be assembled, and to settle all questions on the spot in conjunction with the local civil authorities.

These commissions will also collect a great deal of useful information, and no doubt their work will be used as the basis of any decisions that may be made concerning the increasing of the gendarmerie.

As soon as the Party of Union and Progress lost its influence the party that replaced it began to transfer gendarmerie officers either to the army or to other stations, and all such moves were made without any reason being given, an order from the War Minister that an officer was to be moved merely being sent to the commandant-general of the gendarmerie.

It was of course natural to suppose that the moves were made for political motives, but it seemed a very bad policy to follow, as in several cases very efficient gendarmerie officers were transferred to the army when they really had taken no action in favour of one party more than another.

At present a good many officers are being posted to the gendarmerie who have had no experience at all in the work, and this naturally is not likely to promote efficiency. After many applications I have at last succeeded in procuring altogether 1,500 belts and cartridge holders for this secteur, and now that the cloth required for the men's uniforms can be made in Smyrna their appearance ought to be improved. Owing to the preparations for war and mobilisation the gendarmes have been very hard at work getting in the soldiers called up for service.

The Greeks, who by being Ottoman subjects are liable for service, are not apparently very anxious to serve, and in a village of 10,000 inhabitants, out of 185 Greeks only three could be traced, the remainder having escaped to America or elsewhere.

The school for "chefs de poste" at Smyrna has been closed by order from Constantinople, and all the non-commissioned officers have been sent back to their units to help get in the men called up for the army.

The idea of employing British officers in the gendarmerie in Macedonia appears to have been allowed to lapse owing to the political situation, and as at the moment of writing this report there seems every chance of war breaking out it would not appear that any attempt can be made to improve the gendarmerie in Macedonia and Roumelia at present.

A large number of the officers of the gendarmerie have received orders to join the units in the army to which they have been detailed, and soon a good many companies of gendarmerie will be without any officers. The civil authorities are everywhere collecting animals for the use of the army, and a price of from 10*l.* to 12*l.* is being given for horses and mules.

At present there are 450 conscripts under training at the gendarmerie school, and the school is now able to train about 1,200 men a-year as gendarmes. Second class men are gradually drafted out of the regiments and their places are being taken by first class men, and it is seldom that the old type of man is seen except in very out of the way places.

The new type of civil official very seldom makes misuse of the gendarmerie, and they nearly all realise the advantage of having a well-organised force to help them carry out the orders of the Government.

In a good many cases during the last elections civil officials employed the gendarmerie to promote the interests of the Party of Union and Progress, but the officers and men could only obey the officials who are in position to give them direct orders.

Brigandage of a sort is not quite done away with, and quite lately the officer commanding the gendarmerie battalion at Denijli broke up a band of eight armed men two hours from Chivril. Four of the brigands were shot and others were wounded and captured.

Owing to want of numbers very little can be done to stop the large amount of tobacco smuggling that goes on, and parties of forty or fifty armed smugglers are frequently seen or heard of in the interior.

In order to prevent constant transfers of gendarmerie officers I have written a letter of strong remonstrance to the inspector-general, but as matters stand I do not think that much can be done at present to stop it.

I have, &c.
C. J. HAWKER.

[44118] No. 70.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Louther.

(No. 836.)
(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, October* 21, 1912.

YOUR telegram No. 493 of 19th October: Samos.

If application is made by Ottoman Government His Majesty's Government will raise no objection.

(Repeated to Paris, No. 608, and St. Petersburgh, No. 1084.)

[40698] No. 71.

Foreign Office to Treasury.

Sir, *Foreign Office, October* 21, 1912.

I AM directed by Secretary Sir Edward Grey to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 30th July last on the subject of the lighting and buoyage in the Persian Gulf, and to state that, in accordance with the suggestion contained in the last paragraph of that letter, he duly brought its contents to the notice of the Secretary of State for India.

With reference to the penultimate paragraph of your letter, the Marquess of Crewe suggests that the attention of the Lords Commissioners should be drawn to the telegram from the Government of India dated the 13th May, 1912. That telegram shows that the provision of dioptric lanterns at Bushire was necessitated by action taken by the Russian consul-general subsequently to the preparation of the general scheme for the lighting and buoyage of the Persian Gulf and to the approval of the expenditure referred to above. The inclusion of the measure in the general scheme would therefore have been impossible.

If practicable, the cost of the lanterns will be met from the sum of which their Lordships have consented to bear a moiety. Should this not be practicable, the Marquess of Crewe suggests that it would be reasonable, in view of the fact that the measure is an important, necessary, and inexpensive addition to the scheme previously sanctioned, that the cost should, like that of the rest of the scheme, be shared between the Imperial and Indian exchequers.

If the statement in your letter that their Lordships cannot entertain proposals for an increase of the expenditure already sanctioned is to be understood as merely an emphatic expression of the opinion that additional expenditure ought not to be incurred without clear and urgent necessity, Lord Crewe has no criticism to offer, since he is of the same opinion. But the statement, he points out, if literally interpreted, negatives the possibility at any time of an extension of the scheme that is now being carried out. This would involve serious consequences, since the action taken by the Imperial and Indian Governments in regard to the buoyage and lighting of the Persian Gulf is necessarily influenced by the action of other Powers; and, while there is at present no reason to doubt that the sanctioned scheme provides all that is necessary, his Lordship regards it as impossible to acquiesce in the view that it is to be regarded as absolutely final.

I am to add that Sir E. Grey is in complete agreement with the views of the Marquess of Crewe on this subject, which is one of serious importance in regard to the maintenance of British political predominance in the region in question.

The India Office point out that the estimates approved by the Lords Commissioners amount to 84,000*l.* (not 88,000*l.*) initial and 7,090*l.* recurring.

I am, &c.
LOUIS MALLET.

[44559] No. 72.

Mr. Cooke (Smyrna–Aidin Railway) to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 22.)

Winchester House, Old Broad Street, London,
October 21, 1912.

Sir,

I HAVE been requested by the president and council of this company to inform you that a draft convention for a small extension of this company's system has lately

been placed by the company's agent at Constantinople before the Ottoman Government for its approval, and that his Excellency, Kiamil Pasha, in an interview recently accorded by him to our general manager, expressed his approval of the project.

The leading points of the scheme for which a concession is now asked by the company are as follows:—

1. The prolongation by twenty-five years—1950 to 1975—of the company's present concessions.

2. The extension of the line from Lake Egherdir to Lake Beyshehir of an approximate length of 80 kilom.

3. An option for the construction of a branch line to Sandikli.

In all other respects the conditions are identical with the previous concessions granted by the Ottoman Government to this company.

I have been further requested by the president and council to respectfully express their hope that you may be willing to instruct His Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople to give his support to the above scheme during the impending negotiations between this company's agent in Constantinople and the members of the Turkish Government whom he may have to approach on this subject.

I have, &c.
THOS. W. COOKE, *Secretary.*

[44554] No. 73.

National Bank of Turkey to Foreign Office.—(Received October 22.)

(Confidential.)
Sir,

50, Cornhill, London, October 21, 1912.

I BEG leave to submit for Secretary Sir Edward Grey's information and consideration certain matters relating to the navigation of the Tigris and Euphrates, which I mentioned to him on the 17th instant.

A Belgian company has recently been formed by Messrs. Lynch and the Deutsche Bank for steam navigation on the Tigris, primarily with a view to the conveyance of material for the Bagdad Railway. It is, however, probably the intention of the parties who have formed this company to negotiate with the Government for the amalgamation of their enterprise with the line of steamships maintained by the Turkish Government.

At the same time, a Belgian group has been in negotiation with the Ottoman Government for the formation of a new company, in which the existing Government navigation enterprise would be absorbed. If this negotiation should be successful, the National Bank of Turkey would have the opportunity of taking a large interest in the business.

It has been suggested that these various interests should combine, and that a group should be formed consisting of Messrs. Lynch, the National Bank of Turkey, the Deutsche Bank, and the Belgian group, each of the four members having one-fourth share in the capital, and that this combination should negotiate with the Turkish Government to form an Ottoman company, in which the Government would have an interest, for the purpose of taking over the steamers at present owned by the Government as well as those owned by Messrs. Lynch and the Deutsche Bank.

We are not aware at present whether Messrs. Lynch are inclined to enter into a combination of the kind indicated, but, if that should be the case, it appears to us that the basis suggested is the one which we might find acceptable.

Before proceeding further in the matter, we should esteem it a favour if we could be informed whether Sir Edward Grey sees any objection to the proposed arrangements, and whether the British members of the group might expect to receive the support of His Majesty's Government in negotiations with the Ottoman Government.

I am, &c.
H. BABINGTON SMITH.

[44643] No. 74.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 22.)

(No. 508.)
(Telegraphic.)

Constantinople, October 22, 1912.

FOLLOWING from Mr. Barnham at Samos:—

"We have persuaded senators and leaders of parties, including Sofoulis, to sign an engagement to maintain order and respect local authorities until the moment when it will be possible to grant reforms. The representatives of people are unanimous in desiring the immediate recall of Prince, which we also think absolutely necessary, the senators being able to maintain order until the nomination of his successor chosen by the Porte with the approval of protecting Powers. We consider our mission accomplished.

"Preceding is the substance of identic telegram. French text by post.

"I leave Wednesday."

My French colleague is withdrawing his [group omitted: ? consul], and Minister for Foreign Affairs says that he is ready to send a new governor if we wish it.

[44646] No. 75.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 22.)

(No. 511.)
(Telegraphic.)

Constantinople, October 22, 1912.

MINISTER for Foreign Affairs to-day said that Turkish Government were getting somewhat alarmed at the reports received from their consuls of military activity in the Kars district. Information did not seem very precise.

[44666] No. 76.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 23.)

(No. 862.)
Sir,

Constantinople, October 15, 1912.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 759 of the 10th September, I have the honour to forward herewith a despatch from His Majesty's consul-general at Smyrna, enclosing copy of a despatch from His Majesty's vice-consul at Samos reporting resignation of Prince of Samos, the formation of a Provisional Government, and the arrival of two Imperial commissioners from Constantinople.

I have, &c.
GERARD LOWTHER.

Enclosure 1 in No. 76.

Consul-General Barnham to Sir G. Lowther.

(No. 12.)
Sir,

Smyrna, October 14, 1912.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith copy of a despatch from Vice-Consul Mair reporting the resignation of the Prince of Samos the formation of a Provisional Government by the insurgents and the arrival of two Imperial commissioners from Constantinople.

I have, &c.
HENRY D. BARNHAM

Enclosure 2 in No. 76.

Vice-Consul Marc to Consul-General Barnham.

Samos, October 9, 1912.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to inform you that owing to the recent events and the withdrawal of all the Turkish troops, including the whole garrison stationed at Vathy, the Prince-Governor is entirely powerless.

The Senators representing the four districts of the island as well as all the local authorities have ceased to recognise him as governor, and it appears that he has submitted his resignation to the Porte, stating that, under the present circumstances, it is utterly impossible for him to govern the island.

The revolutionists together with the senators ordered general elections in all the villages of the island to take place on Friday next the 11th instant.

A Provisional Government will then be formed until the Samian demands outlined in my despatch are put into force.

Generally speaking, Samos is in a state of anarchy at present, and the intervention of the protecting Powers as regards certain reforms of the organised charter of the organised charter of the island is greatly needed.

I further beg to bring to your notice that two commissioners from Constantinople have just arrived here to investigate matters; but, unfortunately, no one of the local authorities dares to approach them, fearing the revolutionists.

I have, &c.

GREGORY D. L. MARC.

[44673] No. 77.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—Received October 23.)

(No. 872.)

Constantinople, October 15, 1912.

Sir,

WITH reference to Mr. Marling's despatch No. 808 of the 24th ultimo and to my despatch No. 847 of the 9th instant, I have the honour to report that, as a result of a declaration by the Armenian National Assembly condemning His Beatitude's attitude as impolitic, the Armenian Patriarch has withdrawn his resignation and has taken up his residence again at the Patriarchate.

According to a report from His Majesty's vice-consulate at Van, the expedition sent by the Government against the Kurdish brigands, Mir Mahé and Said Bey, has so far not achieved its object. Another expedition has been sent against the Kurdish tribes who stole 6,000 sheep and killed many Nestorians in 1911, but a state of insecurity still seems to prevail in that vilayet.

It is reported by the dragoman in charge of the British vice-consulate at Diarbekir that, during the last twelve months of the Committee régime, the Kurdish aghas in the kazas of Jezireh and Mardin have re-established themselves in the positions they held under Abdul Hamid, and have been forcing the villagers to pay them taxes after taking possession of the villages by means of forged title-deeds. The murder of the Armenian notable in the streets of Diarbekir on the 9th September (see Mr. Marling's despatch above referred to) is also attributed locally to the Committee's agents. The victim was the only Christian candidate for Diarbekir in the next elections, and his death led to a statement signed by the heads of the Christian communities being addressed to the British and French vice-consulates accusing the Committee of Union and Progress, and begging for assistance towards securing an improvement in the insupportable position of non-Moslems in Eastern Anatolia.

I have, &c.

GERARD LOWTHER.

[44643] No. 78.

*Sir Edward Grey to Sir F. Bertie.**

(No. 619.)

(Telegraphic.) R. *Foreign Office, October* 23, 1912.

SIR G. LOWTHER'S telegram No. 508 of 22nd October: Samos.

If the Porte is ready to send a new governor it would appear to be well that he should go. You should enquire of Government to which you are accredited whether they will instruct their representative at Constantinople to encourage the Porte to do so.

The question of reforms should, however, in my opinion, stand over for the present. In regard to the phrase "with the approval of protecting Powers," interference, or the exercise of control by the Powers in the selection of the new governor would be an innovation scarcely warranted by the present condition of affairs. It might, however, have a tranquillising effect in Samos if the Powers interested themselves unofficially in the matter by enquiring as to whom the Turkish Minister for Foreign Affairs has in view for the new governor. I do not consider that more can be done without setting a precedent, which, at this stage, would be premature.

You should enquire whether this is also the view of the French (Russian) Government, and, if so, whether they propose to instruct the French (Russian) Ambassador at Constantinople in this sense.

(Repeated to Constantinople, No. 846.)

[44559] No. 79.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Lowther.

(No. 493.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, October 24, 1912.

I TRANSMIT to your Excellency herewith a copy of a letter, dated the 21st October, from the Secretary to the Ottoman railway from Smyrna to Aidin.†

I request your Excellency to support the company in its negotiations with the Ottoman Government, unless you see any objection to such a course, and I have to request your Excellency to furnish me with your views on the negotiations.

I am, &c.

E. GREY.

[45000] No. 80.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 25.)

(No. 523.)

(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, October* 24, 1912.

CONSUL-GENERAL at Salonica reports occupation of Lemnos by Greeks on 21st October.

[45075] No. 81.

Sir R. Rodd to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 25.)

(No. 147.)

(Telegraphic.) R. *Rome, October* 24, 1912.

MY telegram No. 77 of 30th June: Pilgrim traffic.

I am still receiving information as to movements of pilgrim ships for communication to Italian Government.

In view of the raising of Red Sea blockade (see my telegram No. 79, Treaty), such information is no longer required.

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* Also to Sir G. Buchanan (No. 109).

† No. 72.

[45075] No. 82.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Lowther.

(No. 857.)
(Telegraphic.) R. *Foreign Office, October 25, 1912.*

SIR R. RODD'S telegram No. 147 of the 24th October: Pilgrim traffic.

Please instruct consuls accordingly.

[44554]. No. 83.

*Foreign Office to India Office.**

Foreign Office, October 26, 1912.

Sir,

I AM directed by Secretary Sir E. Grey to request that he may be furnished with the observations of the Secretary of State for India on the letter of the 21st October from the National Bank of Turkey respecting a possible combine for the future navigation of the Euphrates and Tigris.

I am, &c.
LOUIS MALLET.

45367] No. 84.

Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 27.)

(No. 391.)
(Telegraphic.) R. *St. Petersburgh, October 27, 1912.*

YOUR telegram No. 1099 of 23rd October: Samos.

Assistant Minister for Foreign Affairs concurs in your views, and will instruct their representative Constantinople accordingly.

[45405] No. 85.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 28.)

(No. 887.) *Constantinople, October 23, 1912.*

Sir,

WITH reference to your despatch No. 484 of the 15th instant, relative to the tenders for work in connection with the Mesopotamian irrigation scheme, I have the honour to report that I learn, on enquiry, that whilst the Government wish Sir J. Jackson (Limited) to go on with the work, the Public Works Department have intimated that the contract under which the irrigation works have hitherto been carried out must be altered. The department now wish Messrs. Jackson to assume the responsibility for all work of construction. This, however, the firm refused to undertake, but after considerable negotiation they have consented to be responsible for any faulty or defective work, a condition which appears to have satisfied the department, who are now framing a clause to that effect to be added to the original contract. I understand that the conditions regarding remuneration, &c., are to remain as before.

In view of the above and of the present financial position of the Turkish Government, I am of opinion that it would be useless for me to make any communication at the present moment to the Porte on the subject of the tenders for the general Mesopotamian irrigation scheme.

I have, &c.
GERARD LOWTHER.

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* Also to Board of Trade, *mutatis mutandis*.

[46007] No. 86.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 30.)

(No. 547.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, October 30, 1912.*

YOUR telegram No. 872 of yesterday.

In view of engagement signed by senators and military authorities of Samos to maintain order until reforms have been introduced, I see no objection to withdrawal. Presumably French ship will remain for the present.

[46023] No. 87.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 30.)

(No. 550.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, October 30, 1912.*

MY telegram No. 544 of 29th October: Samos.

His Majesty's consul-general at Smyrna reports that senators have appointed 150 civilian police for keeping order in the island, and thinks the "Medea" can be withdrawn.

[45978] No. 88.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir F. Bertie.

(No. 526.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, October 30, 1912.*

M. CAMBON informed Sir A. Nicolson on the 28th October that a French naval division would be sent to Beyrout and another to Syra.

I am, &c.
E. GREY.

[46213] No. 89.

Board of Trade to Foreign Office.—(Received November 1.)

Sir, *Board of Trade, October 31, 1912.*

I AM directed by the Board of Trade to acknowledge the receipt of your letters of the 23rd and 26th October, enclosing copy of a letter from Sir H. Babington Smith relative to a proposed combination for the navigation of the Euphrates and Tigris rivers, and to offer the following observations thereon for Sir E. Grey's consideration.

So far as the information contained in Sir H. Babington Smith's letter enables the Board to form an opinion, the effect of the proposed arrangement would seem to be that the Euphrates and Tigris Steam Navigation Company, which is at present an independent and essentially British undertaking, would be absorbed by an international company in which British interests would certainly not be predominant, and might even be in a subordinate position. All possibility of river freights being reduced as a result of competition would therefore be liable to be eliminated if the arrangement should be concluded. The new company would presumably be registered in Turkey, or, in any event, not in the United Kingdom.

The Board understand that the concession under which the Euphrates and Tigris Steam Navigation Company operate was in fact granted, not to the company, but to His Majesty's Government, but they presume that, should the proposed combination be formed with the approval (expressed or implied) of His Majesty's Government, the latter would not thereafter be able to claim the rights under that concession for any other undertaking, however unsatisfactory the operations of the new company might prove to be from the point of view of British interests.

The Board have always attached very great importance to the retention of the full rights of His Majesty's Government in respect of the navigation of the Euphrates and Tigris and their exercise by an independent British concern, and they think this the more necessary now in view of the necessity for maintaining a competing means of

communication with that of the Bagdad Railway Company. They would accordingly suggest that Sir H. Babington Smith should be informed that as at present advised His Majesty's Government cannot view the proposal with favour.

I am, &c.
GEO. J. STANLEY.

[46326] No. 90.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received November 2.)

India Office, November 1, 1912.

Sir,

IN reply to your letter dated the 26th October, 1912, inviting the observations of the Secretary of State for India on certain proposals that have been made by Sir H. Babington-Smith respecting a combine for the future navigation of the Euphrates and Tigris, I am directed by the Marquess of Crewe to say that the proposals in question do not *primâ facie* commend themselves to him. They are, it is true, very vague in form at present, and it is possible that they might be rendered innocuous. But it will be remembered that in the recent interdepartmental discussions regarding the Bagdad Railway great stress was laid on the necessity of keeping the control of the river between Bagdad and the Gulf entirely independent of the Bagdad Railway Company, as the only means of ensuring effective competition with the railway. It is to be feared that this degree of independence could not be looked for in a combine only one half of which would be British, while the company to be eventually formed would be an Ottoman company, which might not always work on purely commercial principles. So long as Messrs. Lynch remain the only British firm enjoying rights of navigation on these rivers, so long will it apparently be impossible for His Majesty's Government to support a combination, for general commercial purposes, between them and other groups politically or financially interested in the Bagdad Railway, except on terms securing the absolute preponderance of British interests and preventing the alienation of the British share to other parties.

From this point of view it seems important to ascertain what is the attitude of Messrs. Lynch towards the proposal, and with which of the two banks—if with either—they are in touch; and I am to suggest that, before His Majesty's Government finally decide, further information should, if possible, be obtained on these points.

I am, &c.
T. W. HOLDERNESS.

[46575] No. 91.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 4.)

(No. 904.)
Constantinople, October 26, 1912.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to forward herewith a despatch from His Majesty's consul-general at Smyrna reporting on the proceedings of his mission to Samos up to the 18th October.

I have, &c.
GERARD LOWTHER.

Enclosure in No. 91.

Consul-General Barnham to Sir G. Lowther.

Samos, October 18, 1912.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to report that, in conformity with your Excellency's instructions, I proceeded to Samos on the 13th instant with my French and Russian colleagues for the purpose of enquiring into the various complaints which had given rise to the recent disturbances and of making joint recommendations for the future government of the island in conformity with the terms of the organic statute.

We proceeded by rail to Ephesus, and thence by road to Scala Nuova, where we embarked upon the French cruiser "Bruix."

On our arrival at Vathy the same evening we called upon Vegeli Bey, the Prince-Governor, and made arrangements for an interview the following morning.

We found the Prince suffering physically and quite unnerved by recent events.

Five days previously (8th October) Sophoulis having sent word to the Prince that his authority was no longer recognised and that he had formed a Provisional Government, the Prince telegraphed his resignation to the Porte.

He was, however, instructed to remain at his post, but it was evident that his personal authority was nil, and he had no means of asserting it beyond the support of the commander of the French cruiser, who had received instructions to maintain order and had full discretion to land armed men for the purpose. When we met the Prince at the palace we learned that a new National Assembly, which had been elected on the previous Friday, was about to meet in the cathedral under the presidency of Sophoulis—an assembly which consisted of ninety-three instead of thirty-nine members, the number elected ever since the organic statute was framed. After discussing the situation we decided to support the Prince should he decide to proclaim the assembly illegal. Accordingly a proclamation was drawn up and signed by the Prince, in which it was stated that it was issued with our approval.

We then called upon the bishop and requested him not to permit the cathedral to be used for political meetings; but, in order to ensure that the meeting should not take place, my French colleague requested the commander of the "Bruix" to send a small party of armed men to mount guard outside the cathedral and Senate House.

In spite of these precautions, an hour later someone in the cathedral rang the bell to call the members together, and the proclamation itself was seized by one of the insurgents at the printing office.

As these acts seemed to point to a wanton disregard of our own presence and mission at Samos, it was decided that, for the purpose of occupying the printing office and strengthening the existing guard, the "Bruix" should land twenty-five men, the Russian gun-boat "Donetz" eight, and I was requested to ask the commander of His Majesty's ship "Medea" to send eight.

Commander Keane was unable to so, as his orders permit him to land troops solely for the protection of the lives and property of foreign subjects. No further attempt was made to hold the meeting, and as the town gradually resumed its ordinary aspect of tranquillity, and we received a message from the senators that our wishes should in future be respected, the guards were withdrawn. The printer had, however, decamped with all his staff, and the proclamation was never printed. Only two copies in manuscript were placarded.

We have since been in daily communication with the senators, and after a careful study of the reforms demanded will submit such as we think reasonable in an identic telegram.

I have, &c.
HENRY D. BARNHAM.

[46578] No. 92.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 4.)

(No. 912.)
Constantinople, October 29, 1912.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to forward herewith two despatches from His Majesty's consul-general at Smyrna reporting on his recent mission to Samos.

I have, &c.
GERARD LOWTHER.

Enclosure 1 in No. 92.

Consul-General Barnham to Sir G. Lowther.

(No. 123. Confidential.)
Smyrna, October 11, 1912.

Sir,

WITH reference to my telegram No. 62 of this date, which is identic in terms with one sent by the French and Russian colleagues to their Ambassadors, I have the honour to submit to your Excellency the considerations which have influenced me personally

in making the suggestion that with a view to obtaining a successful issue to our mission we should have the support of an armed force.

Our mission is to examine the situation at Samos, and having done so, to submit to you such recommendations as in our judgment will secure to the Samiotes a Government in keeping with the Organic Statute and will pacify them.

We proceed to Samos bearing in mind the chief matters of complaint which have been reported by the vice-consuls, and with a view to examine these we shall take counsel with the Prince-Governor and senators, the consular officers, and any intelligent residents who may be residing within the neutral zone.

The insurgents, I presume, are aware that we are coming, and as it appears that M. Sofoulis has actually formed a Provisional Government I have no doubt that they suppose we are going to enter into negotiations with them, and that directly we arrive M. Sofoulis will wish to see us.

We, however, do not propose to enter into any communication with M. Sofoulis unless expressly directed to do so. Your Excellency's present instructions do not suggest that we should negotiate with the insurgents, and I feel very strongly that whatever may be the value of the recommendations we may submit to you their execution will be quite impossible until M. Sofoulis and these armed marauders from outside have left the island. Their expulsion would also have a salutary effect in the other islands of the Ægean, the inhabitants of which are only too likely to conclude from the success of the Sofoulis's invasion that they may declare themselves independent after the conclusion of peace with Italy.

Our task would have been comparatively easy had it been undertaken before the Turkish garrison was withdrawn.

As matters stand I feel that the position of M. Sofoulis is too strong to be trifled with, and that if he remains in the island there will perhaps be a more dangerous development.

There is a very wide-spread report that, in the event of the declaration of war between Greece and Turkey, it is his intention to proclaim the annexation of Samos to Greece.

I have, &c.
HENRY D. BARNHAM.

Enclosure 2 in No. 92.

Consul-General Barnham to Sir G. Lowther.

(No. 129. Confidential.)

Smyrna, October 25, 1912.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to report that before leaving Samos we thought it desirable that we should it possible take some action with a view to ensure the tranquillity of the island until the moment when it would be possible to carry out reforms.

We felt at this critical moment when the Porte is overwhelmed with difficulties it was most improbable that the Imperial Government would have time or inclination to trouble itself about the affairs of Samos, and we therefore thought it would be well to bring all parties together, including the Prince and Sofoulis for the purpose of effecting a reconciliation, and if possible to restore the Prince's authority.

It was accordingly arranged that the Prince, my colleagues, and myself should meet the representatives of the people of Samos at the Senate House last Monday morning.

At the last moment the Prince refused to come, saying he had not understood that Sofoulis was to be present, and that he did not think the Porte would approve of his attending the meeting under the circumstances.

We were therefore compelled to go without him, as the senators and notables were awaiting our appearance.

We met in the Council Chamber of the Senate House, and there present several hundred persons, including the four senators, and Sofoulis and Nicolaïdes, the party leaders.

We gave them to understand that we were disposed to recommend to the protecting Powers such reforms as we had found to be just and reasonable, but we pointed out that this was not the moment to demand reforms when the Porte was harassed by the cares of war, and that we must therefore impose as a condition of our

recommending them that they should sign an engagement to maintain order and respect authority after our departure and until the matter could be attended to.

Sofoulis expressed his gratitude and that of all present to the protecting Powers for their benevolent attitude towards them, but he solemnly declared that unless the Prince were recalled he could not guarantee the preservation of order, and this declaration evoked such a display of excitement that we at once realised the fact that the Prince must leave the island, and that we had no option but to recognise the *status quo*.

We talked the matter over privately and agreed to telegraph an identic message to our Ambassadors recommending the Prince's immediate recall.

We then informed the Samians of our intention, whereupon they at once affixed their signatures to an engagement to maintain order and respect the local authorities pending the consideration of the reforms. (Copy herewith.)

I must here mention that a petition for the Prince's recall bearing ninety signatures had been drawn up the same morning before it was known that the meeting was to be held.

I do not think that the demand for the recall of the Prince is due to any personal feeling against Vegleri Bey, who is far more sympathetic than his predecessor, the late Andreas Kopassi, but rather it aims at the removal of one who they hope will be the last representative of a class—Princes who have always acted as functionaries of the Porte, inviting the interference of the Porte in the affairs of an autonomous island by constantly referring for its decision matters which, by the terms of the charter, they are empowered to decide independently.

Vegleri Bey is entitled to sympathy for the ungrateful position in which he has been placed.

I am told of errors of judgment which he has committed, and of his inability to come to a decision at critical moments; yet I feel sure that had his predecessor, who was a man of iron will, been alive and in office at the time, he also would have been helpless from the moment the troops were withdrawn.

The difference between the two men is that Kopassi Bey would have protested against the withdrawal of all the troops at once and strained every nerve to prevent it, whereas Vegleri Bey made no protest at all, although he admits that it was at his instance that this consular mission was sent to Samos, and that his object was that we should devise means to restore his authority. He should have realised that we would have had a far better chance of success if a small force had been left behind until our mission was accomplished.

He told me that he had recommended the gradual withdrawal of the troops, and he is right in saying that, even if he had protested against the immediate withdrawal of all the troops, the Porte would not have listened, in view of their urgent need of troops in Roumelia.

In consequence of the withdrawal of the troops and the uncompromising attitude of Sofoulis towards the Prince, we have been compelled to tacitly recognise the revolutionary *status quo*.

Sofoulis is implacable because he was excluded from the general amnesty which was accorded when the Prince came to Samos.

There seems to have been an impression in the minds of the Samians that it is within the competence of their Prince to grant a general amnesty without reference to the Porte—at least, this appears to be the view held by Sofoulis.

When Vegleri Bey came to Samos there were eighteen persons under sentence of penal servitude for complicity in the rising of 1908, besides Sofoulis, who was under sentence of death. When a petition for pardon was presented to the Prince by these eighteen, Sofoulis refused to ask pardon for himself. His brother-in-law, Georgiades, begged the Prince to include Sofoulis in the amnesty, and the Prince expressed his readiness to recommend his name to the Porte if Sofoulis would take the first step by presenting a petition; but he refused to do so. He left the island, went to Patmos (where he took part in the meeting for the promotion of the autonomy of the islands of the Ægean), then made an abortive attempt to collect men at Icaria for the invasion of Samos, and finally went to Rhodes, where he entered into relations with the enemies of Turkey.

Thus, prior to the recent hostilities, which have left him master of the situation, he had been engaged in a series of treasonable actions which would amply justify the Porte in hanging him as a traitor; yet such is the position of affairs in Samos that it is absolutely necessary that his amnesty should be granted, in order to give a new reformed Government, such as we propose, a chance of success.

The preservation of order at Vathy has been in the hands of the French since the recent hostilities took place, but I think that they exercise an unnecessary display of force for the purpose. Armed blue-jackets patrol the streets day and night—quite unnecessarily I think, as the presence of three war-ships in the harbour should be a sufficient reminder to the onlooker that he must keep the peace.

This, of course, only applies to Vathy; other parts of the island we must hope will be kept in order by the senators in the terms of the engagement which they have signed.

As regards the expulsion or disarmament of strangers who came to the island with Sofoulis, I do not think it is advisable to take any steps at present. Sofoulis assured me that they had all left, and it is probable that those who have no interest in the island have done so.

Nothing can be done in this direction until the new gendarmerie has been formed, when the administration should frame regulations for the grant of licences to carry arms and for the suppression of smuggling.

I will submit to your Excellency as soon as possible a detailed report upon the reform which we have recommended as being of first importance, as well as others which have come under discussion, some of which would, if approved, require the sanction of the Porte, while others are details of administration which the local administration is empowered to carry out under the Organic Statute.

This is, however, a matter which will require careful consideration.

I beg to forward herewith the original French text of the two identic telegrams which we had the honour to transmit to our respective Ambassadors from Samos.

I have, &c.

HENRY D. BARNHAM.

Enclosure 3 in No. 92.

Identic Telegram addressed to Ambassadors of Protecting Powers.

Samos, le 19 octobre, 1912.

LE Prince de Samos sera nommé par la Sublime Porte avec l'assentiment des Puissances protectrices.

Il sera chrétien, préférablement orthodoxe, autant que possible non fonctionnaire du Gouvernement ottoman, nommé pour cinq ans, irrévocable pendant cette période, son mandat pouvant être renouvelé.

2. Les députés sont élus pour quatre ans, avec l'obligation de nommer, dès l'ouverture de la session, quatre conseillers responsables à la tête d'une des branches d'Administration suivantes:—

(*a.*) Finances.
(*b.*) Instruction publique et Culte.
(*c.*) Affaires intérieures et Justice.
(*d.*) Affaires commerciales, Postes et Télégraphes.

Le conseiller le plus âgé remplira les fonctions du vice-président du Conseil.

3. Il est nécessaire d'améliorer l'organisation judiciaire. Tous les magistrats devraient être inamovibles, choisis d'après leur mérite personnel et par la voie de concours.

Il est désirable que le président de la Cour d'Appel, le président du tribunal de première instance et le procureur soient des étrangers.

4. Dorénavant aucunes troupes ottomanes de terre ou de mer ne pourront séjourner dans l'île.

Il est par conséquent de toute urgence d'organiser la gendarmerie, en confiant ce soin à des officiers étrangers ayant sous leurs ordres un nombre de gendarmes grecs sortis des écoles de gendarmerie en Turquie et choisis par l'instructeur européen.

5. Vu le tribut payé à la Sublime Porte et en considération des charges que la nouvelle organisation imposera à la principauté, il est juste que le service des Postes et Télégraphes ainsi que les droits de phares soient rendus aux Samiens.

Enclosure 4 in No. 92.

Engagement signed by Samian Representatives.

LES Samiens, reconnaissants de la sollicitude des Puissances, s'engagent jusqu'au moment où les réformes pourront être obtenues à reconnaître d'une façon expresse les autorités légales établies dans l'île et à concourir de la façon la plus efficace au maintien de l'ordre et de la sécurité publique, conformément aux lois et règlements de tout temps en vigueur.

D. GEORGIADES,
D. ORPHANOS,
ADAMIDES,
NICOLO,
Sénateurs.

T. SOFOULIS.
ANASSINIS.
NICOLAIDES.
MANOLIADES.
GEORGIADES.
S. JOANNIDES (*Procureur général*).
E. AFTIAS (*Caissier général*).
KARADIMITRIOU.
NICOLAIDESI.
C. GEORGIADES.
N. ORPHANOS.

Enclosure 5 in No. 92.

Identic Telegram addressed to Ambassadors of Protecting Powers.

Samos, le 21 octobre, 1912.

NOUS avons réussi à faire signer par les sénateurs et chefs des partis, y compris Sofoulis, un engagement de maintenir l'ordre et respecter les autorités locales jusqu'au moment où les réformes proposées par nous puissent être accordées.

Nous considérons notre mission comme terminée, mais, d'après la volonté unanime des représentants de l'île, le rappel immédiat du Prince, que nous considérons comme justifié, s'impose, les sénateurs pouvant, jusqu'à la nomination de son successeur, choisi avec l'assentiment des Puissances, exercer l'autorité.

[46585]

No. 93.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 4.)

(No. 921.)
Sir,

Constantinople, October 30, 1912.

I HAVE the honour to forward herewith a despatch from His Majesty's consul-general at Smyrna, recommending the withdrawal of His Majesty's ship "Medea" from Samos, as there is no longer need of her.

I have, &c.

GERARD LOWTHER.

Enclosure in No. 93.

Consul-General Barnham to Sir G. Lowther.

(No. 130.)
Sir,

Smyrna, October 28, 1912.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 129, I have the honour to report that I have been privately informed by Commander Keane, His Majesty's ship "Medea," at Samos, that the senators have appointed 150 civil police for the purpose of keeping order.

This is an excellent measure and in keeping with the engagement which the Senators and party leaders gave to my colleagues any myself before we left the island.

Commander Keane has taken the opportunity to point out that there is no further need for the presence of one of His Majesty's ships at Vathy, and as I am confident that the provisional Government realises that it is to their own interest to prove that they can be trusted alone, I venture to suggest that His Majesty's ship "Medea" might, on your Excellency's recommendation, be withdrawn from Samos.

The Russian gun-boat "Donetz" has already left, and Commander Keane understands that she will not return.

Mr. Vice-Consul Mare will report if any unforeseen circumstances should make the return of one of His Majesty's ships to Samos necessary, but as matters stand I see no necessity for His Majesty's ship "Medea" remaining there.

I have, &c.
HENRY D. BARNHAM.

[47250] No. 94.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 7.)

(No. 924.)
Sir, *Constantinople, November* 1, 1912.

I HAVE the honour to forward herewith a despatch from His Majesty's consul-general at Smyrna enclosing despatches from His Majesty's vice-consul at Rhodes on the subject of the attitude of the inhabitants of the Sporades with regard to the possible restoration of those islands to Turkey.

I have, &c.
GERARD LOWTHER.

Enclosure 1 in No. 94.

Consul-General Barnham to Sir G. Lowther.

(No. 131.)
Sir, *Smyrna, October* 29, 1912.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith copies of three despatches received from Sir A. Biliotti at Rhodes.

The first, dated the 22nd, and the third, dated the 25th instant, treat of the agitation of the Greek inhabitants of Rhodes and other islands in Italian occupation against reoccupation by the Turks.

The second, dated the 24th instant, reports the desire of native Mahommedans that the restoration of the islands to the Ottoman Government should not take place until the termination of the Balkan war.

I have, &c.
HENRY D. BARNHAM.

Enclosure 2 in No. 94.

Acting Vice-Consul Sir A. Biliotti to Consul-General Barnham.

Sir, *Rhodes, October* 22, 1912.

IN continuation of my two immediately preceding despatches Nos. 117 and 118, I have the honour to report that in the course of yesterday, General Ameglio sent for the Greek Archbishop, the mayor (a Greek), and some of the leading members of the Greek community and warned them that, by the signature of peace the Turks having become the friends of the Italians, all reprehensible speeches or actions against them on the part of their co-religionists would be severely punished. I am told that his Excellency also asked for six torpedo-boats to go round the Sporades Isles in order to maintain order and tranquillity.

It is rumoured that in consequence of the treaty of peace Rhodian peasants declare that they will rebel rather than accept again the Turkish yoke. I am convinced that there is not anything alarming in these declarations, so long as the Rhodians are left to themselves and are not excited by agitators and especially by armed bands from outside.

It is as well to point out that the Mussulmans, who form at most the fourth part of the population, have been all completely disarmed by the Italians, while the Greeks, who were fully provided with rifles and ammunition, have increased their stock by collecting part of the arms and cartridges thrown away by Rhodian redifs and volunteers who deserted from Psithos. This circumstance should be taken into consideration in case the Italian occupation cannot be prolonged until the definite fate of Rhodes is decided upon.

I have, &c.
ALFRED BILIOTTI.

Enclosure 3 in No. 94.

Acting Vice-Consul Sir A. Biliotti to Consul-General Barnham.

Sir, *Rhodes, October* 24, 1912.

NATIVE Mussulmans are very anxious that the Italian occupation should be continued until the conclusion of the Balkan war. They allege two principal reasons on their behalf:—

1. The modified feeling of the Italian authorities towards them, which is quite the reverse of what it was on their first arrival here, with regard to the two native races; and

2. The fear that on the departure of the Italians the Porte may call them for the third time to serve or to pay again exoneration tax.

Non-Mussulmans assure me that the contingent of 100 or 120 men levied in this island since the Italian war has broken out have had to disburse under this head no less than 10,000 Turkish liras. In order to provide that sum they have exhausted all their resources. They sold their wives' and daughters' modest gold ornaments, even everything they strictly could dispense with in their households. The situation of the Mussulmans in Cos, on whom I have no special information, appears to be identical.

In connection with the military service of Mussulmans in these two islands I beg to submit what follows:—

Ever since their settlement here they were only bound to keep guard as gunners in the castles built by the Knights of St. John in their islands. Towards the year 1865 they were nominally incorporated in the army, but continued as before their service as gunners in their native islands. The seat of the Governor-General of the Archipelago having been transferred for a few years to the Dardanelles, they had to serve for a time in the castle of that town. It is only since the constitution that they have been called to serve as soldiers out of their islands.

As a consequence of the Italo-Turkish treaty of peace, the privileges enjoyed *ab antiquo* by the islands occupied by Italian forces are to be not only maintained, but even extended, especially as regards, it is hoped, exemption from military service.

Rhodes and Cos, being in the number of occupied islands, being situated in the midst of the Sporades, and connected with them by administrative and other ties, could not make an exception. Native Mussulmans have enjoyed until four years ago a privilege concerning conscription which they have a right to revendicate, under present circumstances, and which cannot be denied to native Christians. Besides, Christian soldiers belonging to these islands would be a most dangerous element to introduce in the Turkish army.

It should not be forgotten that Castellorizo and Nikaria, although not being occupied by Italian forces, must follow the fate of the other ten Sporades Isles of which they form part.

I have, &c.
ALFRED BILIOTTI.

Enclosure 4 in No. 94.

Acting Vice-Consul Sir A. Biliotti to Consul-General Barnham.

Sir, *Rhodes, October* 25, 1912.

A GANG of eight or ten Rhodian Greeks are exciting since a few days their co-religionists in the town and in the villages to demonstrate in favour of union with

Greece. The Greek consul-general, who, notwithstanding that his country is in war with Turkey, is still allowed to remain here, is naturally the soul of this movement. It would seem that these political agitators are indisposed against their Archbishop, whom they tried to induce to side with them, and who wisely replied that he could interfere in no way in matters decided between Sovereigns.

Useless to say that the same propaganda for union with Greece is carried on in the Sporades Isles, with less restraint and more energy.

General Ameglio has caused some of the leaders of this movement in the principal isles to be brought here in torpedo-boats, and has warned them that he would not tolerate any hostile demonstration against Turkey as long as the isles were occupied by Italian forces. I learn that he has sent this morning one of his superior officers, a major of campaign artillery, on a mission to the island of Calymnos. Three or four Italian cruisers are cruising night and day among the isles of the Sporades; the "Garibaldi" has called in the course of last night at Rhodes.

I have, &c.
ALFRED BILIOTTI.

[47584] No. 95.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 8.)

(No. 967.)
(Telegraphic.) R. *Constantinople, November 8, 1912.*

MY telegram No. 288 of 24th October, 1911.
Porte notifies relighting of lights in the Red Sea.

[47919] No. 96.

Consul Stevens to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 11.)

(No. 17.)
Sir, *Batoum, October 28, 1912.*

I HAVE the honour to report that the Caucasian newspapers announce the imminent departure from Tiflis of Russian Government engineers to survey the country between Sarikamish and Erzeroum. This work, it would appear, is being undertaken with a view to develop, in the near future, an existing plan for the construction of a railway to unite the Kars branch of the Trans-Caucasian line, which has recently been extended to Sarikamish, with Erzeroum.

I have, &c.
P. STEVENS.

[47819] No. 97.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 11.)

(No. 935.)
Sir, *Constantinople, November 4, 1912.*

IN the month of June last His Majesty's vice-consul at Adana reported that considerable excitement had been caused in the vilayet by the desertion, at Hajin, of five or six Armenian recruits, who held up a guard-house, and provided themselves with arms and ammunition. In spite of the efforts of the authorities to capture them, the deserters appear to have remained at large, and Mr. Vice-Consul Matthews reported that, in general, ill-feeling between Kurds and Armenians ran very high, and that Christian recruits complained that they were ill-treated by their Moslem fellow-soldiers.

In a telegram which I have to-day received from Adana, Mr. Matthews reports that on the 2nd November an Armenian notable from Hajin was carried off to the mountains, apparently by Kurds, as a sort of reprisal for the desertions referred to above. Great excitement has been caused by this act of brigandage among the population of the district of Hajin, which is almost all Armenian.

In Mr. Matthews's opinion, the situation thus created contains elements of danger, but he reports that the vali and the Hajin authorities are doing all they can to control it.

I have, &c.
GERARD LOWTHER.

[47823] No. 98.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 11.)

(No. 939.)
Sir, *Constantinople, November 6, 1912.*

I HAVE the honour to forward to you herewith copy of a despatch from His Majesty's consul at Bussorah respecting the attitude of certain Montific tribes.

I have, &c.
GERARD LOWTHER.

Enclosure in No. 98.

Consul Crow to Mr. Marling.

(No. 47.)
Sir, *Bussorah, October 1, 1912.*

REPORTS having reached me that Ajeymi, the son of the late Sadun Pasha, contemplated creating trouble in order to avenge the death of his father, who, as will be remembered, died a prisoner at Aleppo on his way to Constantinople last year, I made enquiries with the following result:—

It is said that a telegram was dispatched to the Minister of the Interior and other high authorities, and certain newspapers, shortly before the recent dissolution of Parliament, in the name of Ajeymi-bin-Sadun, by one Essayimi, a member of the Committee of Union and Progress here, suggesting that certain Montific Arab tribes under Ajeymi-bin-Sadun, numbering 50,000 armed men, should march to Constantinople in the event of any reactionary attempt being made against the constitution, with a view to support the Parliament. I am informed that Ajeymi-bin-Sadun was in no way responsible for this telegram, which was merely a bit of bluff on the part of the committee, and that Essayimi denies the authorship of it.

Ajeymi seems to be anxious to keep on good terms with the Government, as he has not so many friends among the Montific Arabs. It appears that the Mutessarif of Nassriye asked him some weeks ago to join an expedition against the Al Aboodah tribes, who were near Shattra, on the Euphrates, and that Ajeymi declined, as he had a small plundering expedition of his own on hand. Ajeymi's younger brother is at Nassriye with the mutessarif, and Ajeymi himself, with his family and tribes, have settled at Ghabeshia, about eight hours from Bussorah. He started on his "ghazoo" about twelve days ago in the direction of Sefwan and then went northwards, and is now said to be back again in Ghabeshia, and quiet. I hear he did not attack or plunder any tribes.

It is further reported that the Government troops engaged the Al-Aboodah tribes about three weeks ago and were defeated, losing twenty men and having to retreat from Shattra. The Al Aboodah are said to have lost thirty men. The Mutessarif of Nassriye, I hear, is in communication with the commander of the XIIIth Army Corps on the subject of these tribes, who are troublesome. The Arabs have great difficulty at present in getting ammunition, and as long as this is the case, it is unlikely that there will be any warlike movement of importance in the Montific district.

Orders have been received to collect the units of the 1st battalion of the 142th regiment, now distributed at Ummkassr, Zobeir, Sefwan, and Fao, and send them to Ojeir. 100 men left here last week for service at Kurna, and 68 men, time-expired, were discharged last week. The garrison in Bussorah town has thus been reduced to about 80 men and 150 marines.

I have, &c.
F. E. CROW.

[47828] No. 99.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 11.)

(No. 944.)
Sir, *Constantinople, November 5, 1912.*

IN obedience to the instructions contained in your telegram No. 944 of the 1st instant, I communicated to Gabriel Effendi yesterday the reasons which made it impossible for His Majesty's Government to consent to an increase of 4 per cent. in

the Turkish customs duties, while making it clear that His Majesty's Government did not wish to add to the embarrassment of Turkey at this moment.

His Excellency was in such a condition of extreme depression, owing to the unfavourable news of the war, that he was disinclined to discuss this or any other matter of routine business, but merely said that there was a misunderstanding, that Tewfik Pasha had not been instructed to ask for the consent of His Majesty's Government to the increase, but had been directed to say that the Turkish Government hoped that His Majesty's Government would not make any objection to the levy of these extra customs duties.

As, however, Gabriel Effendi did not pursue the matter, I did not consider it necessary to discuss with him the slight difference between the instructions said to have been sent to Tewfik Pasha and the message conveyed by his Excellency to you.

I understand from my French and Russian colleagues that they have informed the Minister for Foreign Affairs that their Governments are unable to agree to the increase.

I have, &c.
GERARD LOWTHER.

[48284] No. 100.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 13.)

(No. 947.)
Sir, *Constantinople, November 7, 1912.*

WITH reference to your despatch No. 493 of the 24th ultimo, I have the honour to transmit herewith copy of the application presented by Mr. Pears, Constantinople agent of the Aidin Railway Company, to the Minister of Public Works in regard to the extension of the company's system in the neighbourhood of Lake Egherdir.

I advised Mr. Pears to send in the application in question on behalf of his company, but, in view of the recent very serious accident on the line, which caused the death of some 140 soldiers, I advised him not to press it for the present. In any case, it would not be seriously considered by the Ottoman Government during the present crisis, but I shall not fail to press it at a more opportune moment.

I have, &c.
GERARD LOWTHER.

Enclosure in No. 100.

Mr. Pears to Ottoman Minister of Public Works.

Constantinople, le 20 octobre (2 novembre), 1912.

Excellence,

LA Compagnie du Chemin de Fer de Smyrne–Aïdin, désireuse de faire profiter des bienfaits du chemin de fer les régions comprises entre le lac d'Egherdir et le lac de Beychédir, demande présentement la concession de la construction et de l'exploitation d'une ligne d'une longueur approximative de 80 kilom. partant d'un point du rivage oriental du lac d'Egherdir à une distance d'environ 20 kilom. de la ville d'Eghèrdir, et aboutissant au rivage du lac de Beychédir, et la construction facultative d'un embranchement à Sandikli, en partant d'un point de la ligne existante près de la station de Kara-Kouyou moyennant les conditions suivantes :—

1. La prolongation, pour vingt-cinq années, de la durée de la concession des lignes actuellement exploitées par la compagnie (y inclus l'extension d'Eghèrdir), soit à partir du 15 octobre, 1950 (N.S.), jusqu'au 15 octobre, 1975.

2. Les lignes présentement sollicitées formeront partie intégrante du réseau actuellement exploité par la compagnie, et leur durée de concession prendre fin en même temps que celle de la concession principale à la date ci-dessus indiquée du 15 octobre, 1975 (N.S.).

3. Le Gouvernement Impérial ottoman s'engage à ne pas accorder, sans le consentement de la compagnie, à une autre personne ou société, la concession de la construction de toutes lignes de chemin de fer pouvant faire concurrence aux lignes concédées à la compagnie dans un rayon de 40 kilom., ou 23 milles, de chaque côté de la voie.

4. La compagnie s'engage à construire et à exploiter les lignes dont la concession est présentement sollicitée en conformité des conditions indiquées à l'article 3 de la convention du 18 (30) avril, 1888, c'est-à-dire à ses propres frais, risques et périls. La réception définitive de ces lignes aura lieu un an après leur réception provisoire.

En vue d'assurer l'exercice régulier du droit de contrôle général appartenant au Gouvernement Impérial ottoman la compagnie paiera chaque année, par versements mensuels, à l'ordre du Ministère des Travaux publics à titre de frais de contrôle des lignes présentement sollicitées, la somme de £ T. 3 par chaque kilomètre construite et exploitée, et ce, à partir de la date de la signature de la convention, jusqu'à l'expiration de la concession.

5. Les transports sur le lac d'Egherdir, entre la ligne existante et celle qui est proposée et *vice versâ*, seront assurés par les soins de la compagnie d'Aïdin au moyen de force de vapeur.

6. La Compagnie du Chemin de Fer d'Aïdin aura le droit de navigation sur le lac de Beychédir au moyen de force de vapeur ou autres moyens convenables, aussi bien que sur le lac d'Eghèrdir.

7. Tout le matériel importé de l'étranger pour la construction de ce prolongement et pour l'établissement des moyens de transport sur les lacs seront importés en franchise de droits de douane.

8. Le prix de rachat des lignes présentement sollicitées sera de 4,500*l.* par kilomètre.

Le Gouvernement Impérial ottoman rachètera ces lignes aussi bien que les lignes actuellement existantes, en conformité des dispositions des articles 4, 5 et 6 de la convention de 1888, la date du 15 octobre, 1935, mentionnée auxdits articles, devant être toutefois remplacée par celle du 15 octobre, 1975.

9. Les clauses de la convention de 1888 non modifiées par la convention à intervenir seront également applicables dans leur intégralité aux lignes présentement sollicitées.

Me tenant à la disposition de votre Excellence pour tous renseignements supplémentaires, j'ai l'honneur, &c.

H. E. PEARS,
Représentant de la Compagnie du Chemin de Fer Smyrne–Aïdin.

[40516] No. 101.

Foreign Office to Admiralty.

(Confidential.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, November 15, 1912.*

I AM directed by Secretary Sir E. Grey to state, for the information of the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, that he has had under very careful consideration their Lordships' views, as expressed in your confidential letter of the 26th September last, on the subject of the oil-bearing lands in Mesopotamia and Persia.

In view of the attitude of the Lords Commissioners, as explained in the second and third paragraphs of your letter, and in order to clear the ground before the meeting of the proposed interdepartmental committee, Sir E. Grey had entered into informal and tentative communications with Sir H. Babington-Smith, as representing the National Bank of Turkey (which is understood to be associated with the Shell Transport Company), and with Mr. Greenway, as representing the Anglo-Persian Oil Company.

These communications were based on the assumption that the Lords Commissioners attached "much importance to the maintenance of the Persian oil-fields in the hands of a British company," and deprecated the increasing monopoly of the oil supply by a large international concern.

In these circumstances, it is with some perplexity that Sir E. Grey has learnt of a communication made to this department by Mr. Greenway, who called here on the 13th instant.

Mr. Greenway represented that he had recently interviewed at the Admiralty Sir Francis Hopwood and the Director of Navy Contracts, and that these gentlemen had been discouraging as to the prospects of the Lords Commissioners entering into a

contract with the Anglo-Persian Oil Company. He prefaced his account of what had passed at the interview by the following remarks:—

Certain influential directors of the Anglo-Persian Oil Company were inclined to come to terms with the Shell Transport Company, who were holding out substantial inducements and exercising considerable pressure to this end. The Anglo-Persian Oil Company was a commercial undertaking, and as such its first consideration was the interests of the shareholders; this being so, the resistance of certain directors, on Imperial grounds, to entering the Shell Transport combine must in the end break down. Mr. Greenway himself had been holding out the hope, which hitherto he had been encouraged to entertain, that the Lords Commissioners were desirous of seeing the independence of the company maintained and were ready to support them with that object. In this conviction he had sought an interview with Sir Francis Hopwood, had laid all the facts before him, and had enquired whether the Lords Commissioners would be prepared to make a contract with the Anglo-Persian Oil Company for a period of, say, twenty years. He had explained that the present resources of the company would not enable them to supply a sufficient quantity of fuel oil for Government purposes, and in order to make this feasible the Anglo-Persian Oil Company would have to incur an expenditure of 2,000,000*l.*; this the company was not prepared to do unless the Lords Commissioners would assist them. Mr. Greenway was understood to state that he had informally proposed to Sir F. Hopwood that the Admiralty should pay to the company 100,000*l.* a-year, receiving in return oil fuel on advantageous terms.

The Director of Contracts, however, intimated that there would be parliamentary objections to a contract such as that proposed, and it was thereupon suggested that the Government of India might enter into a contract and allow the Admiralty to have an option on a certain quantity of the oil. Sir F. Hopwood was not, however, prepared to make any such suggestion to the India Office and did not encourage Mr. Greenway to hope that the proposal would be acceptable. Moreover, Sir F. Hopwood is represented as stating that the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty must maintain full freedom of action, and that it might be convenient if they were able to purchase oil at other places than in the Persian Gulf.

Mr. Greenway thereupon said that if this were so then there could be no objection to the Anglo-Persian Oil Company amalgamating forthwith with the Shell Transport Company, though such a consummation would appear to be in direct conflict with the views hitherto held by the Lords Commissioners, who had, ever since the inception of the company, let it be understood that they attached importance to its retaining its British character and its complete independence.

Mr. Greenway added that it was true that, for the moment, there were two or three independent sources of supply, and, amongst others, mentioned the Mexican Eagle Company; but he contended it was absolutely certain that their absorption was only a question of time, and that the Union Company had been amalgamated with the Shell Transport Company only a few days ago. He further stated that Sir Marcus Samuel, chairman of the Shell Transport Company, confidently expected that fuel oil would reach three times its present price within a few years.

This department has, of course, not sufficient technical information at its disposal to discuss the economic side of the question, but they have hitherto proceeded on the assumption that the maintenance of the independence of the Anglo-Persian Oil Company was eminently desirable in order to maintain competition.

If Mr. Greenway's statements are correct, Sir E. Grey is now in some doubt as to what the precise views of the Lords Commissioners may be. He cannot overlook the possibility that the National Bank of Turkey, which will no doubt play an important part in the financial arrangements necessary in Turkey on the conclusion of peace, may, as a condition of a loan, attempt to secure a monopoly in the petroliferous districts of Mosul and Bagdad, a consummation which might seriously affect the independence of the Anglo-Persian Oil Company, since it would enable the Shell Transport Company to cut prices.

He would therefore desire to be placed in possession of the Admiralty views in a final and authoritative form as soon as possible, and would suggest that it would be expedient for the proposed interdepartmental committee to meet at an early date in order that definite recommendations may be laid before His Majesty's Government without further delay.

I am accordingly to propose that, if possible, the committee should meet at this Office at 11·30 A.M. on Wednesday, 20th November. I am to add that this department will be represented by Sir A. Nicolson, Sir L. Mallet, and Mr. Parker.

I am to add that letters are being addressed to the India Office and Board of Trade with a view to the attendance of representatives of those departments, and that Sir E. Grey would be glad to learn who will represent the Admiralty.

I am, &c.
LOUIS MALLET.

[48814] No. 102.

Consul-General Barnham to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 16.)

(No. 21.)
Sir, *Smyrna, November 9, 1912.*

WITH reference to your telegram of the 7th and my reply of the 8th instant, I have the honour to state that I think it would be well that a cruiser should be sent to Smyrna.

My reason for suggesting this is the fact that refugees from Dedeagatch and Cavalla are arriving here in large numbers, and it is probable that this immigration will assume large proportions, because Smyrna is remote from the scene of war and on account of its prosperity could presumably relieve the wants of many.

The presence here of a large number of Mahommedans who have been driven from their homes and naturally are ill-disposed to Christians is an element of danger, especially in view of the large colony of Cretans living in Smyrna.

The garrison of Smyrna consists of two battalions of reserves and another at Kilizmen, on the southern shore of the gulf, about 8 miles distant. These are to be replaced by "mostahfiz"—old reserve men who have long since forgotten the use of arms, and their officers are worthless.

The only reliable force is the gendarmerie. Besides those stationed at the guard-houses in the city and suburbs, there are 500 men at the school who have just completed their course and are to be kept ready for service in case of need.

This, however, is a very inadequate force for the protection of a city of 400,000 inhabitants.

I have, &c.
HENRY D. BARNHAM.

[48792] No. 103.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 16.)

(No. 952.)
Sir, *Constantinople, November 10, 1912.*

I HAVE the honour to forward herewith a despatch from His Majesty's consul at Aleppo, reporting on current events in the Aleppo vilayet, and on the progress of the Bagdad railway construction work.

I have, &c.
GERARD LOWTHER.

Enclosure in No. 103.

Consul Fontana to Sir G. Lowther.

(No. 67.)
Sir, *Aleppo, October 26, 1912.*

I HAVE the honour to submit the following short report upon recent events in this vilayet, and in the independent sanjak of Ourfa.

The newly-appointed vali, Vefik Bey, has arrived from Constantinople, and has taken up his duties as Governor-General of the Aleppo vilayet. The ex-vali, Ghalib Bey, who, as reported in my despatch No. 55 of the 7th September last, was dismissed from his post, left some time ago for Constantinople.

Vefik Bey is an elderly man of large private means. He has resided for some time at Constantinople without official employment. He was formerly Vali of Sivas, and afterwards of Kastamouni. He complains, as his predecessors complained, of limited and ill-defined powers. He is already on intimate terms with Nafi Pasha Jabri, ex-deputy for Aleppo and member of the Opposition, the head of the influential and ill-reputed

family of Jabri Zadeh, with whom Kiazim Bey, a former vali, would have no dealings whatever (*vide* my despatch No. 2 of the 20th March, 1911).

During the past two months there has been an exodus of Syrian artisans and workmen from this district, as many as from forty to fifty leaving Aleppo daily by train for Beirout, on their way to Brazil, and, more especially, the Argentine Republic. The dread of military service, and the continual depression in trade and industry account for this emigration, which, however, has been temporarily stopped by the authorities since the beginning of the levy of reserves. The emigrants purchase tickets at the rate of three Napoleons per passenger from Alexandria to Argentina, where the great outflow of Italians, who contemplate settling in the Tripolitan provinces, has induced the Government to encourage the immigration of likely settlers from this region. Lodging and work are found for the immigrants on their arrival by the Argentine authorities, and their money is changed for them by specially appointed agents who meet them on landing, and assist them in various ways.

Within the last ten days letters received from American missionaries at Marash and Aintab report an unsatisfactory state of affairs in those parts. Highway robbery is frequent on the country roads, and Armenian peasant women and girls are carried off by Moslems, who allow them to return to their homes after cohabiting with them. Both my American colleague and I have received letters from Aintab expressing apprehension at the attitude of the kaimakam there, who was appointed from Tripoli of Africa, where he held some official position previous to the Italian invasion. The man is described as a reactionary and an anti-Christian, whose example tends to embitter the Moslems against the Christians, who in that district are mostly Armenians. I understand that he is not well thought of even by the Aleppo authorities. Quite recently I received a letter from an English missionary at Aintab dwelling upon the dubious attitude of the kaimakam, and the fact that the bodies of two murdered Moslems had been found in separate gardens belonging to respectable Armenians, a sure sign pointing to designed incitement of the Mahommedans against their Christian neighbours. I brought this matter to the notice of the vali, who sent the kaimakam a cypher telegram, instructing him to see that no trouble occurred. The Armenian maraklias at Aleppo tells me that he feels some anxiety with regard to Zeitoun. The vali has received reports from Marash to the effect that many Armenian deserters from the army are scouring the Zeitoun district, and he declares that it is the duty of the Armenian agas of Zeitoun to arrest and deliver over to the authorities the deserters and their arms. The mektoubji, who is a Circassian from a village in the Zeitoun vicinity, appears to influence the Governor-General in his views as to the responsibility of the Zeitoun Armenians in harbouring, or in not tracking down, the armed deserters. An attempt was recently made by the aga of a Moslem village in the Zeitoun neighbourhood to capture some Armenians who were sought after by the authorities. He invited them—some fifteen or twenty men—to a banquet, giving notice at the same time to the authorities to send and arrest them. The Armenians, however, went to the banquet armed with their rifles, and put to flight the soldiers who attempted to surround the aga's house. The fate of the aga is unknown. It is unjust for the authorities to blame the Zeitoun Armenians because deserters take refuge in that mountainous district, and to expect them to hunt down and deliver over men well armed with army rifles. In this connection, I would mention the case of a powerful Kurdish aga of the Jorablus district, the chieftain of some 3,000 armed men. He was invited to send volunteers for service in Macedonia in the present war, and consented to do so, provided he were paid £ T. 3 for every volunteer. He obtained a considerable sum of money on account, and sent 200 men as volunteers, with secret orders to return to him as soon as they received their rifles from the military authorities. His orders were carried out, every "volunteer" returning with a new rifle and ammunition, which he handed over to the aga. No retribution, however, has befallen the aga or any of his men for this flagrant theft of Government arms and money during war-time.

From Ourfa I have received good accounts of the mutessarif, a Georgian named Ismail Pasha, who was for a time acting-Vali of Aleppo. The mutessarif has done his best to improve public security, and to discourage Moslem fanaticism and intolerance. He ensured the success of a scheme to provide Ourfa with a good water supply by the construction of a kind of aqueduct connected with a spring called "Abraham's pool," and held sacred by the Moslems of that district. An attempt was made to frustrate the scheme by certain of the notables, who sent a band of roughs to pull down the masonry-work in course of construction at the pool. But the mutessarif, suspecting some such attempt, had gendarmes in waiting to arrest the roughs, twelve of whom are now in prison. The notables then telegraphed to the Porte accusing the mutessarif of impiety

and breach of the constitution, and sent him a copy of their telegram. The mutessarif telegraphed to the Porte that he had received from the ringleaders of the massacre of 1896, who were still at large, a copy of the telegram sent by them, and that if bringing pure water to the town was an impious act, he was guilty of impiety. I understand that the aqueduct is now completed. But since the Montenegrin declaration of war robbery and murder in the Ourfa district are said to be increasing, in spite of the efforts of the mutessarif.

The work on the Bagdad railway line at Jerablus is at a standstill, and the company is everywhere in bad odour in this region. It appears that orders have been received from Frankfurt that a strict economy is to be observed in the work of construction. Seven or eight contractors are prosecuting the company in the local Ottoman commercial court, claiming heavy damages for breach of contract. So far no money has been paid, as far as I can learn, for the expropriation of land through which the line is now running, though money has been received and is held for that purpose. Great sums have been spent in the construction of certain stations, though the line is so badly laid down that accidents constantly happen, seven men having been killed only a few days ago near the Aleppo terminus. A locomotive ran off the rails and cut up the permanent way last week, between Muslemieh and the Sajour, the iron bridge over which is nearing completion. The station at Muslemieh consists in a group of ponderous stone buildings, and out-houses, and presents an imposing spectacle, the more so as only a small Arab village of mud-brick huts with conical roofs is to be seen in the distance.

The station now being built at the village of Jerablus has a platform more than 1 kilom. in length, though the only town of any importance in the district is Birejik, where commercial movement or enterprise hardly exist. A German engineer explains these apparent anomalies by stating that the Bagdad line is merely the highroad preparing for German incursion, and that when the Germans come commerce and agriculture will so vastly increase as to necessitate spacious stations, with adequate store-house accommodation for superabundance of cereals and merchandise.

I am told that a German company, spoken of as the "Deutsche Oriental Gesellschaft" has purchased, or is negotiating for the purchase of an extensive tract of fertile vale-land lying between Killis and Alexandretta.

One German engineer is in charge of the line-section at Jerablus. He is most unpopular owing to his violence with the native workmen who try hard to obtain employment with Mr. Woolley, the director of the excavations at Jerablus (Karchemish). Mr. Woolley employs 200 men, who are well treated and well and regularly paid. Two factors have combined to suspend the work on the railway at Jerablus, *i.e.*, the difficulty of obtaining workmen, who often are not paid according to the agreement made with them, and the hostility of the local landowners. A family bearing the name of Tuma, 4 donums of whose land have been expropriated (but not paid for) by the company, have informed the engineer that work may proceed on the said 4 donums, but that not a cartload of bricks or the foot of a workman shall pass over the surrounding fields, which are their undisputed property. Thus access to the land comprised by the expropriated donums has been cut off. A Kurdish aga and landowner named, I believe, Moussa Ali, took still more serious action in regard to the expropriation of his land. He collected one hundred armed men and, mounted on a fine Arab horse, rode to the quarters occupied by the engineer and his staff. He ordered the work to stop, saying that he would massacre the whole engineering staff if his order was disobeyed. He then began firing his revolver in the air; his horse reared and plunged, nearly unseating him, and the aga, firing wildly, shot his horse through the head. The horse fell dead. Another animal was brought, and the aga, after mounting, him, turned to his men and told them that it was clear Providence did not intend that he should kill the Germans that day. He then rode away, followed by his escort.

The editor of the "Takaddom," a Christian named Shukri Kneyder, who has published violent articles against the Committee of Union and Progress, published two days ago a translation of Reuter's telegrams reporting important Montenegrin victories over the Turks. A notice followed to the effect that the editor disclaimed all responsibility as to the truth of the telegrams. The publication incensed the authorities here; the mufti declared that the editor deserved death, and it seems that some Moslems went to Kneyder's office meaning to kill him. But Kneyder had disappeared and is still in hiding. Owing to pressure brought to bear by the local Committee of Union and Progress, the public prosecutor has ordered his arrest, and his printing press and papers have been confiscated. The same Reuter telegrams, however, have been

published by Beirout newspapers, the editors meeting with no molestation or punishment in consequence.

Three days ago I had occasion to apply for a gendarme to escort an Englishman proceeding from Aleppo to Ourfa. The vali granted the traveller a buyuruldu, but declared with regret that he had no gendarme to send. A similar application made a few days previously by my American colleague met with the same answer. The gendarmes are now used largely as messengers, and the force is quite inadequate for the exceptional needs of the present moment.

The newly-appointed Governor-General of Bagdad, Marshal Zekki Pasha, left Aleppo this morning for Bagdad.

I have, &c.
R. A. FONTANA.

[46326] No. 104.

Foreign Office to Euphrates and Tigris Steam Navigation Company.

(Confidential.)

Sir, *Foreign Office, November* 16, 1912.

WITH reference to your letter of the 7th August last, I am directed by Secretary Sir E. Grey to state, for the confidential information of your board, that a communication has recently been made to him to the effect that it is the probable intention of the parties, who recently formed a Belgian company for the conveyance of material for the Bagdad Railway, to negotiate with the Turkish Government for the amalgamation of their enterprise with the line of steam-ships maintained by the Turkish Government.

It is further indicated that a Belgian group has been in negotiation with the Turkish Government for the formation of a new company, in which the existing Government navigation enterprise would be absorbed, and it appears to have been tentatively suggested, if not definitely proposed, that these various interests should combine, and that an amalgamation, including the vessels of your company, of the Turkish Government, and of the Deutsche Bank, in the form of an Ottoman company, is the end in view.

In view of the great importance involved in this question to British trade interests in general, I am to express Sir E. Grey's hope that you will furnish him with such information as you possess on the subject.

I am to add that when the proposals outlined in this letter were laid before Sir E. Grey it was expressly intimated that, at that date, the other parties concerned were unaware whether you would be inclined to enter a combination of the kind indicated.

I am, &c.
LOUIS MALLET.

[48960] No. 105.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 18.)

(No. 957.)

Sir *Constantinople, November* 10, 1912.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 935 of the 4th instant, and to previous despatches respecting the course of events in Eastern Anatolia, I have the honour to inform you that the recent reports from His Majesty's consular officers point to the existence of some unrest in the Anatolian provinces, which might become dangerous.

The Armenians of Hajin, a village in the Adana vilayet, complain that pressure is being brought to bear on them because they have failed to bring about the surrender of the Armenian deserters, who are now said to form a band of twenty, and to be living by brigandage, and the Moslems of Hajin, in consequence, desire the recall of the local kaimakam, who is an Armenian. The Armenians of Durtyol, another village in the same vilayet, have complained to the vali of their kaimakam's failure to protect them from the exactions of passing troops.

In Adana itself, an Armenian policeman has been fired on and wounded by two Moslems, who were, however, subsequently arrested. In Tarsus, a Mussulman is reported to have declared that if things went badly in Macedonia the Moslems would wipe out the Christians of the vilayet.

The new Vali of Adana, Emin Bey, is reported to be considered locally, rightly or wrongly, an extremist member of the Committee of Union and Progress. He seems to have made himself unpopular with his subordinates at the konak. A disturbing element is added to the situation by the agglomeration of 10,000 Syrian redifs at Tarsus.

During the past quarter, brigandage and murders have increased in the Van vilayet. Besides the bands of the notorious Kurdish brigands, Mir Mahe and Said Bey, a third band has made its appearance and killed several Armenians in the district of Gardjikian, while other brigands are reported to be pillaging caravans on the Caucasus road between Van and Igdir.

Said Bey and Mir Mahe, after successfully ambushing the Government troops against them (see my despatch No. 847 of the 9th ultimo), have apparently succeeded in taking refuge in Persia. Another expedition to collect taxes and to restore order between Kurdish tribes and the Nestorians has apparently failed, and the Government troops, after a month's unsuccessful struggle with the Kurds in the mountains, will probably shortly return to Van, with some losses.

Meanwhile, about the 15th October, Izzet Bey, the new vali appointed by the present Government arrived at Van, and though unable to seize Said Bey and Mir Mahe, he has arrested the Kurdish chiefs who facilitated their escape across the frontier.

In the Bitlis vilayet, during the three weeks ended the 16th October, eleven Armenians had been killed. On the 14th, a small Armenian village near the town of Bitlis was attacked by Kurds, who were, however, driven off by zaptiehs. Another Armenian village called Spagert, situated in Khizan, was reported by Kurds to have been looted and five men killed, and the insecurity of the eastern part of the Mush plain and the Guzel Déré district is such that zaptiehs dare not accompany travellers, it being even said that they have not permission to fire on Kurds.

In these difficult circumstances, the new Vali of Bitlis, Lieutenant-General Ali Pasha, appointed by the present Government to put matters in order, arrived on the 15th October to take up his duties.

In the province of Diarbekir, the state of affairs appears to be equally lamentable. The Kurdish aghas in the Jezireh district are said to have collected some 40,000 piastres as tribute, mostly from Chaldæan villagers and Church lands, and one of these aghas, a leader of the tribal light cavalry, has been terrifying the Christian villages with his threats of pillage.

A religious demonstration on the return to Diarbekir on the 20th September of Niazi Bey and certain Kurdish leaders, who have been exiled since 1909, seems to have caused consternation among the Armenians, who also hold that the two Mussulmans arrested in connection with the recent murder of the Christian candidate for Parliament (see my despatches above referred to) should not have been released without further enquiry.

Writing on the 30th September, the dragoman in charge of the Diarbekir vice-consulate drew my attention to the Kurdish propaganda carried on by Khanil Bey Bedr Khan Zadé, to widespread and very serious outrages by Kurds, and to the approaching manœuvres of hamidiehs, who were receiving arms from the Government. Dangerous fanaticism seems to have been roused by the ex-deputy for Diarbekir, who brought back a hair of the Prophet's beard from Constantinople as a present to the mosque of Lidjei, and has been advising the Kurds not to trade with Christians.

The committee Government's connivance with the Kurdish malefactors has engendered a general expectation of a great massacre, and the feeling of insecurity, added to commercial stagnation, and the feeling that this year's bad harvest will cause further distress during the winter, has led to emigration in considerable numbers.

I have, &c.
GERARD LOWTHER.

[48963] No. 106.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 18.)

(No. 960.)

Sir, *Constantinople, November* 14, 1912.

I HAVE the honour to forward herewith a despatch from His Majesty's consul-general at Smyrna on the subject of reforms for the island of Samos.

I have, &c.
GERARD LOWTHER.

Enclosure in No. 106.

Consul-General Barnham to Sir G. Lowther.

(No. 132.)

Smyrna, November 9, 1912.

Sir,

THE organic statute of 1832 which forms the basis of the administration of the island of Samos is an Act which purports to secure to its inhabitants full and complete autonomy. That at least appears to have been the interpretation given at the time by the protecting Powers whose Ambassadors on the 15th September, 1833, described it as conferring upon the Samian people complete administrative independence.

Eighty years have passed, and it is impossible to say that Samos has greatly prospered, or that it compares favourably with other principal islands of the Ægean under direct Ottoman rule.

Its public works, especially roads, cannot be compared with those of Mitylene, Rhodes, or Chios. There is everywhere evidence of something attempted and suddenly abandoned, such as the laying down of water supply, road building, and harbour works, and the reason for this is political unrest.

Autonomy was granted as an alternative to the annexation of the island to Greece, but although politically separated, there exists a very close connection between Samos and the motherland.

The Samian sends his sons to Athens to be educated, and because the same code of civil and criminal law is in force in Samos as in Greece, he sends him preferably to the law schools, whence he returns to Samos for the purpose of entering political life, not, as a rule, from patriotic motives, but rather to further his personal interests.

The fact that the provisions of the organic statute have been constantly ignored by the Porte, and the privileges conferred by it remain in abeyance, has made it easy for men of that stamp to create a Samian question, and provoke disturbances.

Hitherto the Porte has been allowed to restore order after its own fashion, but Sofoulis, aided by a series of fortuitous circumstances, has now succeeded in creating a question which can only be disposed of by the direct intervention of the protecting Powers.

To this end we have submitted for your approval certain reforms which are radical in their nature and treat of matters which were not mentioned in the statute of 1832, but are good in themselves, and if carried out, will, we think, secure to the islanders real administrative independence.

The Prince of Samos.

The Samian desire that in future the Prince Governor shall be chosen by the Porte with the express approval of the protecting Powers; that he shall be of the orthodox faith; that, if possible, he shall not have previously held any office under the Ottoman Government; that he shall hold the appointment for five years, and be irremovable during that period and eligible for reappointment.

The Samians are led to solicit this favour from the following considerations:—

They say that it is incompatable with the autonomy which had been promised them under the organic statute that the Prince should be dependent upon the will of the Sublime Porte, in precisely the same way as a vali or mutessarif in Anatolia, instead of acting as the president of a constitutional Government.

The functions of the Prince are defined by the organic statute to be—

(*a.*) That he shall ratify the Bills voted by the Assembly;

(*b.*) He shall as president of an executive council of four senators, supervise the execution of the laws voted by the Assembly; and

(*c.*) He shall have no power of veto except as regards external affairs, and it follows that he may only refer questions of this last category to the decision of the Corte.

That the Sublime Porte takes an entirely different view is apparent from a perusal of the Imperial firman of appointment, which contains a clause to the effect that the Prince shall, at all times, keep the Porte informed of matters affecting his office.

He accordingly sends in his reports to the Minister of the Interior in the same way

as the vali of a province in Anatolia, and has a Turkish secretary for the purpose attached to his suite.

Naturally the Prince is bound by his instructions, and when the Minister, on receipt of a report, thinks fit to interfere in the administration, the Prince is bound to carry out his orders at the risk of dismissal if he fails to do so.

The consequence of this is that, although many excellent laws for the administration of the island have been passed by the Legislature since the grant of autonomy, very few of them have been ratified, and if, as a result of this enquiry, the Government of Samos should be recast on surer foundations, it will be necessary that these laws should be ratified.

They should then be incorporated in a manual of statute law for the guidance of the executive council.

Many are the charges brought against the Princes as a class, and in particular against the late Andreas Kopassis. Of these the most serious are:—

1. The Prince takes an active part in politics, seeking by every means, fair or foul, to create a Government party in the Legislature devoted to himself and willing to support his autocratic régime. To this end he employs the gendarmes and soldiery in coercing the electors, and fixes different dates for the elections at different places, so as to have on each occasion sufficient men at his disposal to overcome opposition.

He thus not only secures the return of his own nominees to the Legislature, but also the election by the Legislature of an executive council which shall be as wax in his hands.

Whereas each member of the council should be the executive officer of a separate branch of administration, and held responsible for the same, the Prince assumes the control of everything.

2. The Prince interferes in the course of justice by suspending trials and dictating to the courts the issues upon which a verdict is to be taken.

The late Prince Kopassis, to whom this specially refers, imposed his will upon the assembly and the courts through one of the senators, who was at the same time president of the Assembly and of the criminal court. Under his régime political offenders were kept in prison for eight or nine months without trial.

Such acts naturally provoke rebellion, and I venture to think that a guarantee should be given to the Samians that they will not be repeated.

The Samians feel that this can only be secured by the appointment of a Prince, who shall go to Samos knowing that he is independent of the Porte, irrevocable during a fixed term (five years), and that it is to his interest to serve the people faithfully.

Their wish that the Prince should not have previously been employed in the Ottoman service is difficult to fulfil, but I venture to suggest the name of one who, although not exactly answering this description, would, I believe, be welcomed by the Samians. I refer to Berovitch Pasha, who was Prince of Samos in 1896—and subsequently Governor of Crete.

He was, I believe, removed from Crete because the Porte considered him too sympathetic to the Christian population, and he was very much liked at Samos.

He is, I believe, living in retirement at Venice.

The Executive Council.

Each of the four senators who form the executive council should be held responsible to the Assembly for the administration of one of the following departments:—

(*a.*) Finance.
(*b.*) Justice.
(*c.*) Schools and ecclesiastical foundations.
(*d.*) Public Works.

No order should be signed by the Prince unless it be countersigned by the senator responsible for the department to which the order refers.

The Prince should preside over the council, and one of the four senators be elected vice-president and preside in case of the unavoidable absence of the Prince.

Gendarmerie.

As in future no troops (whether land or sea forces) should be stationed at Samos, it is imperative that a force of gendarmes be organised as soon as possible. It is

recommended that this force be trained by European instructors, who should, as a preliminary step, select a number of ready trained Greek gendarmes from the schools at Smyrna and Constantinople to serve as a nucleus.

The gendarmerie force to be raised should consist of at least 300 men.

Here we have a reaffirmation of the rule laid down by article 5 of the organic statute, with the addition of a provision that in future no Turkish man of war shall be stationed at Samos.

It is understood that French officers will be selected as gendarmerie instructors, and that one will be assigned to each of the four cantons, Vathy, Khora, Marathacampos, and Carlovassi, under the superintendence of an officer of higher rank, who will reside at Vathy (the seat of Government).

I understand that six months ago Vegleri Bey applied to the Porte for the appointment of French officers, and that the only difficulty in the way is the question of their pay and emoluments, which will be chargeable to the Samos budget.

It is proposed to pay the superintending instructor 875 fr., and each of the junior officers 500 fr., per month, with certain allowances.

A nucleus of 100 men, drawn from the Turkish schools (of whom a third should be non-commissioned officers), would cost about £T. 2,500.

I may mention that the monthly pay of an infantry gendarme in Turkey is 200 piastres, or about 34s., and that of a mounted gendarme 230 piastres, or 39s., but that every month a sum about 4s. is deducted for cost of uniform.

I am told that the same scale of pay would be sufficient provided no deduction be made for uniform.

In order that there should be no further charge upon the budget, I suggest that every Samian, from the age of 21 to 30, should be liable to serve as a gendarme, and that, according to the number of men required each year, they should be subject to conscription by ballot, so many men from each town or district, in proportion to its population. Those who wish to be exempted should pay a tax similar to the military exemption tax in Turkey, and the money raised by this means should go to defray the cost of the entire service.

Gendarmes are specially required for the suppression of smuggling and for preventing the use of arms by persons without a licence.

It would be necessary to establish a gendarmerie school at Vathy for the training of the Samian gendarmes.

The Judiciary.

It is suggested that the presidents of the courts and the procureur should be strangers to the island and irremovable. This has special reference to the case of the president of the criminal court under the régime of Prince Kopassi, to which I have referred above.

The trial of political and criminal offenders should take place within one month of the date of arrest.

Posts, Telegraphs, and Lighthouses.

It has been recommended that, in view of the additional expense to be incurred by the proposed gendarmerie, the postal, telegraph, and lighthouse services should be handed over to the Samians.

When this recommendation was made we were of opinion that it would be necessary to exclude from the gendarmerie force natives of Samos and of the islands of the Ægean, lest they should be used for political purposes as formerly; but I think that the safeguards against the abuse of power by the Prince, which have been recited above, should be sufficient without this, and it is for that reason I have suggested the conscription of Samian gendarmes as a measure of economy.

I therefore recommend the transfer of these services to the Samians rather as a matter of principle, because I think the grant of autonomy should carry with it the enjoyment of all the revenues raised on the island.

The Turkish Government, however, should be indemnified for the loss it incurs thereby, and I suggest that, on this account, and in consideration of the fuller measure of autonomy now proposed, the annual tribute to be paid to the Ottoman Government might be increased.

The finances of the island are in good condition. It is true that there was a deficit in the last budget of £T. 1,200, but capital and interest on public loans was paid off to the extent of £T. 4,150, and there is a reserve fund of £T. 15,000 in the Bank of Athens.

I have now passed in review the five principal reforms which were submitted by my colleagues and myself in an identic telegram from Samos.

There is, however, one other of some importance which should have been included in that telegram.

Elections.

Although it is not desired that any change should be made in the constitution of the general Assembly, or in the mode of election, it is desired that there should be a more equitable distribution of the electoral vote.

The population of the island being about 58,000, and the number of members thirty-nine (without counting the metropolitan), there should be one member elected for every 1,500.

As it is there are villages with only 100 inhabitants which return their own member, while Vathy, which has a population of 15,000, returns only two.

There should be, if possible, a grouping together of villages to form an electoral district having one member, and an increase in the number of members in the towns.

It is advisable that the elections should be held once in four years instead of two as at present, that the Assembly should meet every year and sit two months instead of six weeks, and that the elections should be held everywhere on the same day.

Whenever elections have taken place hitherto they have provoked disturbances, and it is therefore desirable that they should be held at as long intervals as possible.

Having suggested that the mandate of the Prince should be renewed every five years, we have thought it undesirable to fix five years also for the life of the Assembly, feeling that it would be better that the Prince should not enter upon his office at a time when the political atmosphere was disturbed.

I submit this report at a time when the political situation is fraught with peril, and the welfare of a little island like Samos is as nothing compared with the larger questions with which your Excellency is now engaged, but whenever it be possible to take this question in hand, I suggest that a new organic statute should be drawn up based on that of 1832, and embodying such of the recommendations we have made as shall be deemed acceptable by the protecting Powers.

I have, &c.
HENRY D. BARNHAM.

[44554] No. 107.

Foreign Office to Board of Trade.

(Confidential.)

Foreign Office, November 18, 1912.

Sir,

I AM directed by Secretary Sir E. Grey to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 31st ultimo respecting the subject of navigation on the Euphrates and Tigris.

I am to inform you that this department is in communication with the Euphrates and Tigris Steam Navigation Company regarding the combination in question, and copies of correspondence with the company will be forwarded to the Board of Trade in due course.

I am to add that the statement in the third paragraph of your letter, as to the conditions under which the company hold their concession, is rather more definite than Sir E. Grey feels warranted in supporting for the moment. The correspondence on the whole of this question (which has formed the subject of no less than five references to the Law Officers of the Crown at different periods) is voluminous and exceptionally complicated. It is, however, being carefully examined and summarised with a view to arriving at definite conclusions.

I am, &c.
LOUIS MALLET.

[49190] No. 108.

Sir F. Bertie to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 19.)

(No. 484.)

Paris, November 16, 1912.

Sir,

I HAD an interview with M. Poincaré to-day, and I have had the honour to report to you, by my telegram No. 201 of this date, the substance of what his Excellency said in regard to the Turkish islands in the Ægean Sea.

I told M. Poincaré that I had received a reply to the report which I had made to you of our conversation on the 13th instant, which his Excellency said was quite correct. (See my telegram No. 196, Very Confidential, of the 13th November.) You were of opinion that it would be more expedient for the question of the Ægean islands to be considered first with the Russian Government, for Russian interests would be seriously affected should the Greeks remain in possession of Lemnos, as they would then possibly be able to blockade all exit from the Dardanelles by means of submarines from this base. Some of the islands being in Greek and some in Italian occupation, it appeared to you that an opportunity would be provided for discussing the question of all the islands with Italy and the other Powers if Russia wished to raise a question about any of the islands in Greek occupation.

I further informed his Excellency that the Italian Ambassador in London had enquired of Sir Arthur Nicolson, in the course of conversation on the 14th instant, why His Majesty's Government were so much interested in the Ægean islands, and that you had informed the Marquess Imperiali in reply, on the 15th instant, that His Majesty's naval authorities were constantly raising the question of obtaining a naval base in the Eastern Mediterranean. His Majesty's Government had always resisted such a suggestion, as they had no wish to disturb the *status quo*, or to provoke difficulties that would arise from obtaining an advantage for themselves. But if any Great Power were to attempt to retain an Ægean island for a naval base, His Majesty's Government would certainly want something of the same nature for themselves; other Great Powers would also want something, and the result would be a general scramble, which would lead to complications. The Italian Ambassador had mentioned sentimental reasons for which Italy might have liked to have kept Rhodes, without any intention of making it a naval base, but had said that if there were all these difficulties his Government could not entertain the idea. You had informed the Marquess Imperiali, on his asking what was to be done with all the islands, that in the opinion of His Majesty's Government it would first have to be settled in the terms of peace whether Turkey was to surrender any of them. If any were to be given up they might perhaps be neutralised under the guarantee of the Great Powers, and their administration might be entrusted to Greece.

M. Poincaré said that he would raise the matter with the Russian Government as well as with the Italian Government. He was, he stated, much more preoccupied by the idea of Italy retaining one or more of the islands than by that of their permanent occupation by Greece.

His Excellency said that the French Government could not admit that Italy should retain possession of any island in the Ægean Sea, for it would entirely alter the naval position in the Mediterranean. The suggestion that she might, for sentimental reasons, desire to retain Rhodes was absurd. A permanent Greek occupation would be quite another matter. It would not be so dangerous to French interests, and it could be more easily dealt with if circumstances so required.

I have, &c.

FRANCIS BERTIE.

[49500] No. 109.

Memorandum by Mr. Parker.

(Confidential.)

ON Sir A. Nicolson's instructions I saw Mr. Greenway this afternoon and discussed the subject of oil fuel supplies for the navy.

I asked him how far, under existing conditions, the Anglo-Persian Oil Company could meet the demand, present and prospective, of the Admiralty.

He replied that the company's concession in Persia was originally for sixty years, of which about fifty were unexpired; that the capacity of their oil refinery was at present 6,000,000 gallons, and that this amount, as the refinery was designed now, would produce 30 per cent. of oil fuel, equal to, say, 75,000 tons per annum.

The requirements of the Admiralty were, or might in the future become, 500,000 tons per annum.

To enable the Anglo-Persian Oil Company to meet these requirements a capital expenditure of 2,000,000*l.* would be indispensable; and this capital expenditure would go to the development of the company's oilfields, pipe lines, and refinery in Persia, and, if possible, to developments in Mesopotamia.

Mr. Greenway said that a contract, in the ordinary acceptation of the word, was useless to the company; what they wanted, in order to be able to raise the 2,000,000*l.* for capital expenditure, was a Government subsidy, or annual payment.

He said this might be arranged in various manners:—

1. The most economical way would be for Government to guarantee the capital expenditure of 2,000,000*l.* in the same way that the Government of India guaranteed railways in India, *i.e.*, Government would guarantee interest up to, say, 4 per cent., and be entitled, as a set-off against the price of the oil, to receive some proportion of the profits of the Anglo-Persian Oil Company. This would involve the Government in a maximum annual expenditure of 80,000*l.* for a period of, say, thirty to thirty-five years.

2. An annual subsidy of 100,000*l.*, pure and simple, for a similar period.

3. An advance annual payment, *on contract*, of 100,000*l.*, the advantage of this proposal being that it would appear under the guise of a contract for the supply of oil fuel, and, as such, perhaps be more acceptable to Parliament than a subsidy pure and simple.

In cases (2) and (3) it was suggested that the Government should be indemnified and repaid for the annual payments by a reduction of 5*s.* per ton from the price payable for the oil delivered. In other words, the Admiralty would pay a fixed price of 30*s.* per ton, less 5*s.*, which would be deducted for purposes of repayment of the Government advance.*

Mr. Greenway suggested, as a possible expedient to overcome parliamentary objections, that it might be possible for the Government of India to enter into the proposed contract or guarantee: this they might do either as agents for His Majesty's Government, or on their own behalf as contributors to the Imperial navy.

Mr. Greenway said that he understood the Government of India were desirous of purchasing oil for Indian State railways, and this might possibly afford an opportunity, while contracting on their own behalf, for making arrangements with the Admiralty for such a portion of the oil contracted for as that department, according to its varying requirements, might desire.

I then asked Mr. Greenway to explain to me the precise bearing of the Mesopotamian oilfields question upon the position of the Anglo-Persian Oil Company.

He said that the wish of the Admiralty, as he had at first understood it, was to maintain the independence of the company he represents; and that, if the Mesopotamian oilfields came under foreign and inimical control, then the Anglo-Persian Oil Company could not maintain its independence, even allowing for the suggested payment of an annual subsidy of 100,000*l.* by His Majesty's Government.

In explanation of this, he said that the profit to be expected from the Government contract would not enable the Anglo-Persian Oil Company to stand up against the Shell Transport Company if that company instituted a war of rates, as would, without doubt, be the case if the Shell Company controlled the Mesopotamian oilfields. The war of rates would be in oil products other than fuel.

If, on the other hand, the Anglo-Persian Oil Company could obtain the concession for the oilfields of Mosul and Bagdad, or even preferential rights therein, their position would be assured.

If the above desiderata, viz., a Government subsidy and preferential rights in Mesopotamia were not secured to the Anglo-Persian Oil Company, then the financial inducements to come to an alliance with the Shell Transport Company would be so overwhelming that the directors, in duty to their shareholders, would have no alternative.

* *Note.*—The Admiralty, I understand, estimate that transport from the Persian Gulf to England would cost *about* 30*s.* a ton: this compares with 18*s.* or so from America.—A. P.

I read this record of the conversation over to Mr. Greenway, who said it fairly represented in summary what he had said, and I agreed that he should have a copy of it.

A. P.

November 19, 1912.

Mr. Greenway to Mr. Parker.

(Confidential.) *Winchester House, Old Broad Street,*
Dear Mr. Parker, *London, November* 20, 1912.

I don't think the point brought out in the enclosed memorandum was made clear in the notes prepared yesterday.

I shall therefore be much obliged if you can add the memorandum as a P.S. to the notes—or attach it—as it is of great importance that it should be known that the members of our board who are advocating this arrangement are inspired by purely patriotic motives. This may be somewhat difficult to believe of financiers, but it is *true*—the Imperialist element on our board being, as you know, very strong. In haste.

Yours sincerely,
C. GREENWAY.

Note.

Mr. Greenway desires to point out that, in any case, the proposed contract with the Admiralty and (or) Indian Government—together with the "subsidy" (or "advance payment" or guarantee) and partial protection from attack which would be secured by keeping the Mesopotamian oilfields in British hands—cannot be as remunerative to the Anglo-Persian Company as an alliance with the foreign combine, the object of which is to secure a world-wide monopoly.

Looking at the question purely from a commercial point of view, the directors therefore ought, in the interest of the shareholders, to accept the partnership offered by the Shell. But in view of the important national interests involved—economical as well as naval—the board, whose patriotic motives cannot be doubted, are ready to conclude a contract on the terms proposed rather than sacrifice the British character of the company, and to justify their action to the shareholders hereafter.

[50815] No. 110.

Minute by Sir A. Nicolson.

Sir Edward Grey,

A MEETING, attended by representatives of the Foreign Office, Board of Trade, and Admiralty, took place this morning to discuss the question of oil-fields in Mesopotamia and Persia.

Mr. Greenaway, on behalf of the Anglo-Persian Oil Company, had intimated that his company would have to form an alliance with the Shell Transport Company on account of the overwhelming advantages which would accrue to the shareholders, unless His Majesty's Government could assist in two ways, firstly, by giving the Anglo-Persian Oil Company a subsidy or annual payment of about 80,000*l* to 100,000*l* for a number of years, and secondly, by enabling the Anglo-Persian Oil Company to obtain a monopoly, or, failing that, preferential rights to work for oil in Mesopotamia.

It appeared from the information given on behalf of the Admiralty that that department were not prepared to accept, purely as a commercial proposition, Mr. Greenway's terms as to an annual payment; though there would be a distinct naval advantage in having the supply of oil from the Persian Gulf to fall back upon, especially as the oil there is of good quality.

So much for the purely naval and commercial aspect of the question; but there is also a political side. If the Admiralty do not come to terms with the Anglo-Persian Company, then that company will be amalgamated by the Shell Company, which is predominantly Dutch, and is closely allied with the Deutsche Bank and Dr. Gwinner.

Dr. Gwinner has certain claims to the Mesopotamian oil-fields. If, therefore, the Anglo-Persian Company is absorbed then there is some risk of the oil-fields in

Mesopotamia and in the whole of Persia being under foreign and largely under German control.

The Germans already control the Bagdad Railway; they are believed, through the National Bank of Turkey, to be seeking to control navigation on the Mesopotamian rivers, and if they also get the oil-concessions in Mesopotamia and Persia they cannot fail to acquire enormous political influence at British expense, in regions which are of supreme importance to India.

The question, therefore, would seem to resolve itself into this: are His Majesty's Government justified in seeking to maintain the independence of the Anglo-Persian Oil Company, which consists largely of men such as Lord Strathcona of undoubted patriotism, by making them an annual payment and assisting them in acquiring the Mesopotamian oil-fields?

Mr. Greenway has pointed out that from a purely financial point of view it would suit the Anglo-Persian Oil Company best to amalgamate with the Shell; but that the directors are prepared to sacrifice the interests of the shareholders to some extent, and to justify their action to them, if His Majesty's Government will afford the annual payment and secure the concession in Mesopotamia.

If the Mesopotamian oil-fields are to be secured for Mr. Greenway's company, it would appear necessary to exercise great pressure, and hold out strong inducements, at Constantinople.

A. N.

Foreign Office, November 20, 1912.

[50189] No. 111.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received November 25.)

Sir, *India Office, November* 23, 1912.

WITH reference to recent correspondence regarding a proposed combine of British and foreign interests for the navigation of the Tigris and Euphrates, I am directed by the Secretary of State for India to suggest, for the consideration of the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, that the time has now come when the Turkish Government should be pressed for a reply to the British memorandum of the 18th July last regarding the Bagdad Railway and kindred matters.

The Marquess of Crewe is not insensible of the objections to taking this step when the Turkish Government are already deeply involved in other embarrassments. But he observes that while they on their side have already asked the gratuitous assent of His Majesty's Government to the 4 per cent. increase in the customs duties, the activity of the Deutsche and National Banks in connection with the navigation of the rivers and the exploitation of oil-fields in Mesopotamia seems likely to alter the situation seriously to the detriment of British interests in those regions. He also apprehends that, if a settlement of the Bagdad Railway and other questions dealt with in the British memorandum is postponed until the war is over, the Turkish Government will be found more impracticable than ever in respect of its Asiatic possessions.

I am, &c.
T. W. HOLDERNESS.

[50196] No. 112.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received November 25.)

Sir, *India Office, November* 23, 1912.

I AM directed by the Secretary of State for India to acknowledge the receipt of your letter, dated the 19th instant, and, in reply, to say that he concurs in the terms of the despatch which it is proposed to send to His Majesty's Ambassador, Constantinople, regarding the relations that should subsist between the proposed Riverain Commission on the Shatt-el-Arab and the local Turkish authorities.

I am, &c.
T. W. HOLDERNESS.

[50630] No. 113.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Lowther.

(No. 1069.)
(Telegraphic.) R. *Foreign Office, November* 25, 1912.

SIR JOHN JACKSON represents that he will be obliged to cease work on Mesopotamian irrigation, involving the discharge of all Bedouin workers, in about a week's time, unless funds are forthcoming at once.

He represents the serious effect which this will have in the province, which has remained quiet up to now, and is in ignorance of the straits to which the Turkish Government are reduced.

You should do all in your power to persuade the Government to send down regular instalments of the credits voted for these works or to consider how to avert the catastrophe in the province.

[50267] No. 114.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 26.)

(No. 970.)
Sir, *Constantinople, November* 18, 1912.

I HAVE the honour to forward herewith a despatch from His Majesty's consul at Bussorah, for the information of the India Office, relative to the condition of affairs in the Montific district.

I have, &c.
GERARD LOWTHER.

Enclosure in No. 114.

Consul Crow to Sir G. Lowther.

(No. 50.)
Sir, *Bussorah, October* 24, 1912.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 47 of the 1st instant, I have the honour to report that Ajeymi, son of the late Sadun Pasha, overpowered and threatened his cousin Mizied Pasha al Gabrshiah, about at day's journey from Bussorah, in the marshes south of the Euphrates, and carried off all the latter's money, alleged to amount to £ T. 71,000 in cash, and Mizied Pasha came down to Kotcyban on the Shatt-el-Arab in order to complain to Government.

I now hear that Abdullah Bey from Hammer, south of the Euphrates, son of the late Fadel Pasha-es-Sadun and cousin to Ajeymi, has concerted with his brothers, and is preparing to attack Ajeymi with a force alleged to number 5,000 armed men, in order to punish him and recover the money taken from their uncle Mizied Pasha.

I have, &c.
F. E. CROW.

[50270] No. 115.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 26.)

(No. 974.)
Sir, *Constantinople, November* 20, 1912.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 957 of the 10th instant, I have the honour to forward to you herewith copy of a despatch from His Majesty's vice-consul at Adana, reporting on the state of affairs in the Adana vilayet.

I have, &c.
GERARD LOWTHER.

Enclosure in No. 115.

Vice-Consul Matthews to Sir G. Lowther.

(No. 44.)
Sir, *Adana, November* 12, 1912.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 43 of the 9th instant, I have the honour to report to your Excellency that on the 11th instant several battalions of Syrian redifs passed through here from Tarsus by rail to Toprak Kaleh and Osmanieh, whence it is stated they will proceed to their depôts. Several other redif battalions, also coming from Tarsus, have passed through Adana on foot. It would thus appear that the redifs quartered near Tarsus are being disbanded.

I am informed that a commission arrived here some days ago to enquire into the reported outbreak of cholera among the troops passing through this vilayet. It appears that the sanitary inspector, Eshref Bey, who is president of the local Committee of Union and Progress Club, made a report to Constantinople that an outbreak of cholera had occurred among the troops, and that their dispatch to the front was consequently suspended (my despatch No. 40 of the 1st instant). The Entente and Liberty Club, on learning what had taken place, telegraphed that Eshref Bey's report was false.

The situation at Hajin (my despatches Nos. 41 and 42 of the 2nd and 4th instant) remains practically unchanged. A detachment of gendarmes was sent there from Adana about the 6th instant. It is reported that Rejebian has been taken to Albistan by Aleppo Kurds, and that his relatives are in treaty with the Kurds respecting the sum to be paid for his release. The Armenians state that Rejebian was carried off at the instigation of certain Turkish officials at Hajin.

The local situation is unsatisfactory, but is not for the moment serious. Shops are open, and the inhabitants are pursuing their ordinary avocations. At the same time, there is much mutual distrust between Moslems and Christians, and a trifle is sufficient to cause a panic. Yesterday explosions made by a defective gas engine in a factory near the Armenian quarter alarmed the Armenians and brought some hundreds of fellahs into the town to see what was afoot. As previously reported, a few isolated outrages on Armenians have occurred, but there is no indication that anything in the nature of a massacre is meditated by the Moslems. A satisfactory feature in the situation is that nothing is heard of Armenian secret societies. Mr. Kenn informed me on the 10th instant that all was quiet at Mersina. So long as no general disturbance occurs Europeans are in no danger.

The German cruiser "Hertha" arrived at Mersina on the 9th instant. I was informed by His Majesty's ship "Barham" at Alexandretta that the "Hertha" had received orders for the protection of British lives and property. The British vice-consul at Mersina informed me to-day that the acting German consul and the commander of the "Hertha" are making arrangements at Mersina to house any German refugees who may come down from the Bagdad Railway construction camps should disorders occur. Mr. Kenn thinks that if the news of these arrangements, for which he can see no necessity, gets about, it will have a most undesirable effect upon the native population. I need only add that I am of the same opinion as Mr. Kenn.

I have, &c.
W. D. W. MATTHEWS.

[50358] No. 116.

Sir F. Bertie to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 26.)

(No. 495. Confidential.)
Sir, *Paris, November* 23, 1912.

I HAD the honour to inform you in my telegram No. 206 of yesterday, with reference to your conversation with the German Ambassador, recorded in your telegram No. 391 of the 20th instant to His Majesty's Ambassador at Berlin, that I learnt from M. Poincaré that the Ægean Islands were not mentioned by the German Minister for Foreign Affairs in his conversation with the French Ambassador on the subject of the war in the Balkans.

M. Poincaré told me yesterday that in a recent conversation with the Italian Ambassador on the matters which would have to be considered by the Powers on the

termination of the war he mentioned the Ægean Islands, whereupon M. Tittoni enquired which of those islands M. Poincaré had in mind. Naturally to those occupied, or which may be occupied, by the Greeks, his Excellency replied, for the Italian Government had given assurances of which the French Government had taken note in regard to those occupied by Italy, and she had moreover bound herself by treaty with Turkey to give them up on Turkish demand. M. Tittoni admitted the treaty engagement, but said that there remained the question of the form of administration for the islands to be discussed. No doubt, observed M. Poincaré, but that would be a matter not for the consideration of the Italian Government in communication with the Porte, but for discussion and settlement between all the Great Powers, including Italy.

I mentioned to M. Poincaré that His Majesty's Ambassador at Rome had not detected any disposition on the part of the Italian Government to depart from their treaty engagements in regard to Rhodes, and he was inclined to think that the Italian Ambassador in London had started the question on his own initiative as a *ballon d'essai*, and the French Ambassador was, I understood, of the same opinion as Sir Rennell Rodd. M. Poincaré said that he was aware of the impressions of the British and French Ambassadors at Rome; his Excellency, however, very justly observed that had the question been raised by the Marquis Imperiali merely on his own initiative it would not have been brought to his (M. Poincaré's) notice by the Greek Minister in Paris as having been discussed at Berlin between the Italian and German Ministers for Foreign Affairs, of which fact M. Jules Cambon had sent confirmatory evidence to M. Poincaré.

From the conversation of a person in close connection with the Italian Embassy here, whom I met on the 20th instant, I have no doubt that the feeling there is that Rhodes ought to be possessed by Italy, and that the means of retaining it might be the inability of Turkey to reimburse Italy for the expenditure on works of various kinds since its occupation by Italian troops. The person in question stated that there had been a large outlay by the Italian Government.

I have, &c.
FRANCIS BERTIE.

[50449] No. 117.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received November 26.)

THE Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and forwards herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, copy of three enclosures in a letter from the Foreign Secretary to the Government of India, dated the 7th November, 1912, relative to lighting and buoyage in the Persian Gulf.

Copies of Enclosures 2 and 3 have been sent to the Admiralty.

India Office, November 25, 1912.

Enclosure 1 in No. 117.

Lieutenant-Colonel Sir P. Cox to Government of India.

Bushire, October 13, 1912.

(Confidential.)

I HAVE the honour to recall that one of the items which, in a personal communication to you when in Calcutta, I included in a list of desiderata which I considered should be sought from the Persian Government by friendly means as opportunity offered, was the general recognition of our prescriptive right to control buoyage and lighting in the Gulf.

2. On the one hand, it seems possible that a suitable opportunity for obtaining this recognition (which we have already sought from the Porte) may occur in the early future in connection with the grant of a fresh loan to Persia; on the other hand, there are some grounds to fear that if we are not soon in the field with a friendly demand in the direction referred to, we may be baulked from making it by some pretentious communication from the Persian Government on the subject of lights or buoys in their waters.

3. I have specific reasons for this apprehension in that at a recent meeting with

the Governor of the Gulf Ports (Mowakker-ed-Dowleh), his Excellency asked me the facts regarding the reported erection of a lighthouse at Tamb, and the location of lighted buoys at Bushire; he enquired at the same time what decision had eventually been arrived at in the case of the proposed lighthouse on Sheikh Shuaib. None of these topics had previously been touched upon between us.

As regards Tamb, I informed him that, with the concurrence of the Sheikh of Shargah, we were about to put up a light there to facilitate navigation. The only remark his Excellency had to make in this connection was to say that there was no doubt that the island properly belonged to Persia, and that they had to thank the blatant action of the Customs in 1904 for spoiling their case in regard thereto. I rejoined that we considered, on the other hand, that it was beyond doubt that the Sheikh of the Jowasim of Oman owned the island, and, as in dealing with this question we had to reckon with patent facts, it seemed waste of time for us to discuss the question now.

As regards the lighted buoys, I informed him that I understood that our marine authorities did intend to place gas buoys at the two anchorages in order to improve the facilities for ships making the harbour. He then asked who was going to pay for their cost and upkeep. I replied that we should do so, as we were doing, and always had done, in the case of other buoys laid for the benefit of navigation in the Gulf.

As regards the proposed light for Sheikh Shuaib, I said that I had heard no more about it, and supposed the idea had been given up, for the present at all events. He said, "What would such a lighthouse cost to erect—only about 2,000*l.*, I understand?" I replied, "Nearer 9,000*l.*"

Then we went on to other subjects.

Judging from the above conversation, I think it possible that the governor may, in order to earn merit with the central authorities, suggest their asserting themselves in connection with the location of buoys in Persian waters.

4. I have thought it advisable to place Government in possession of the precise local position fully by letter, and have forwarded a copy of this communication to His Majesty's Minister, but if the Government of India endorse my view as to the advisability of obtaining formal recognition from the Persian Government, and if loan negotiations are current, they will perhaps see fit to deal with the question by telegraph.

Enclosure 2 in No. 117.

Lieutenant-Colonel Sir P. Cox to Government of India.

Bushire, October 13, 1912.

I HAVE the honour to forward, for the information of the Government of India, a copy of reports which the officer commanding the "Lawrence" has made, at my request, on the condition of the unlighted buoys at Bahrein.

2. It will be seen that he reports that the moorings of all three buoys are defective; that two are out of position, and that the condition of one, the Kusaifah Shoal buoy, is bad.

It appears from the statement enclosed in Trinity House letter, dated the 26th March, to the India Office, that two of these buoys will be replaced by lighted buoys, the Jadum Shoal buoy being the only one of the three that will eventually remain.

Seeing that the lighted buoys for Bahrein have already been made, and should leave England very shortly, if they have not already been shipped, it seems scarcely worth while taking any action in regard to the buoys which are to be replaced, but I have transmitted an emergent indent for new moorings for the Jadum Shoal buoy to the director of the Royal Indian Marine, on receipt of which it will be carefully re-laid.

Extract from a Letter, dated October 6, 1912, *from the Officer Commanding, R.I.M.S. "Lawrence," Bushire, to Lieutenant-Colonel Sir P. Cox.*

Regarding the outer buoy at Bahrein, I refrained from lifting these moorings entirely, but the upper end which I inspected shows one link of the cable so much worn that one could not now be surprised at the buoy parting from its moorings.

Enclosure 3 in No. 117.

Reports by the Officer Commanding, R.I.M.S. "Lawrence"

(1.)

BAHREIN.

Kasaifah Shoal Buoy (black).

Buoy.—On scraping paint off upper surface found much rust, and on beating same found it went right through plates in some parts. Unable to do more than paint it, seeing in what a defective condition it is. Should be replaced as early as possible.

Moorings.—Chain has 12 feet of the total length of 16 fathoms, very worn and ancient-looking chain. Shackles quite worn and unreliable—worn in places from 2¼ inches down to 1⅝ inches. Anchor has lost its arms and flukes and acts only as a weight to the moorings and far too light for that purpose. The cable was very foul of anchor and not secured in any other way.

Buoy was found to be 7 miles out of position, and doubtless drifting back and fore with every spring tide.

Should be entirely removed and new buoy and moorings put in its place. Buoy lies well over instead of being vertical.

Overhauled the 2nd–3rd October, 1912.

F. DEBURGH, *Lieutenant, R.I.M.*

(2.)

Outer Buoy—carrying Mast and Basket—Red—Conical.

Buoy.—In very good condition, but lying very much on its side after overhaul, instead of being in a vertical position.

Cable.—Only a few fathoms of upper end seen, and this part shows some links studless and worn from 2¼ inches down to 1 5/16 inches, and one link, in a bad nip worn to 1 inch only. A large double overhaul knot in upper end of cable, and it is presumed this was originally put in to give extra weight to buoy to make it assume a vertical position in the water.

A shamal blowing and no other moorings available in the event of present ones parting, the remainder of chain and anchor were not lifted. Buoy was in its right position as chartered.

Overhauled the 3rd–5th October, 1912.

F. DEBURGH, *Lieutenant, R.I.M.*

(3.)

Officer Commanding, R.I.M.S. "Lawrence," to Lieutenant-Colonel Sir P. Cox.

October 6, 1912.

In reply to your remarks regarding complaints that some of our buoys are difficult to pick up, from a navigating point of view, owing to them not "watching" vertically, I have the honour to state that the three Bahrein buoys and the "old outer bar" buoy, Shat river, all of which are large conical buoys, are insufficiently weighted through being moored in shoal water; were they in deep water with about a length of chain weighing 26 or 30 cwt. this would be sufficient to keep them upright.

It may be said until the recent overhaul each of these buoys was fairly vertical, and such was the case at Bahrein, especially during high water, but simply owing to the fact that the moorings of each buoy were so foul of its anchor that there was no play in the chain to allow of anything but a vertical position for the buoy; also silt gradually deposits on the chain lying along the bottom and assists in tautening it up between buoy and its anchor. To make these conical buoys watch efficiently, it will be necessary to moor them with sinkers and not anchors, and with just sufficient chain to allow of buoy watching vertically at highest tides in a moderate sea. As an alternative

each buoy could be weighted at its lower end, either by water inside it or mooring chain doubled or trebled. As you are aware, beyond scraping and painting the buoys and clearing the moorings, we have not tampered with them in any other way, so the blame of the buoy not watching vertically should be placed at the door of those who originally laid them.

Enclosure 4 in No. 117.

Lieutenant-Colonel Sir P. Cox to Government of India.

Bushire, October 13, 1912.

I HAVE the honour to attach an extract from a report by the commander of the R.I.M.S. "Lawrence" on the condition of the buoys on the Shatt-el-Arab bar, from which it will be seen that the three buoys, which remained from those taken over in February 1911 from the British India Steam Navigation Company, are all in an unsatisfactory and inefficient condition and require early replacement.

2. In view of the importance of maintaining the efficiency of our buoynge scheme, particularly at the present juncture, I beg that Government will give early consideration to the replacement of these buoys.

3. I am sending a copy of this letter with enclosure to the director, Royal Indian Marine.

Enclosure 5 in No. 117.

Statement of Condition of Work done on Unlighted Buoys by R.I.M.S. "Lawrence" for Quarter ending October 30, 1912.

1. *Place.*—Entrance to Shatt-el-Arab River.

Description.—Outer bar buoy; red, conical (formerly a British India Steam Navigation Company's buoy).

Date when First Laid.—August 1909.

Date when Last Overhauled.—The 26th and 28th August, 1912.

Remarks.—Chipped, scraped and painted two coats of composition all over and one of red lead. Pin of mooring shackle worn ⅝-inch and not renewed. Moorings being found too short for the depth of water, an additional 3 fathoms of 1 1/16-inch chain cable was added. Should be adequately weighted when opportunity offers, so that it may watch fairly vertically.

2. *Place.*—Entrance to Shatt-el-Arab River.

Description.—No. 4 black, conical (from British India Steam Navigation Company.)

Date when First Laid.—July 1908.

Date when Last Overhauled.—The 29th to 31st August, 1912.

Remarks.—Scraped and chipped. Painted with one coat each of composition, read lead and black. Buoy too old and thin to thoroughly chip. Should be replaced early as liable to sink if bumped by any boat, &c.

3. *Place.*—Entrance to Shatt-el-Arab River.

Description.—No 7, black drum or cylindrical shaped (from British India Steam Navigation Company.)

Date when first Laid.—April 1907.

Date when Last Overhauled.—The 31st August to 2nd September, 1912.

Remarks.—Scraped and chipped. Painted with two coats red lead and two of black. This buoy is of no recognised shape for a channel buoy and might be replaced by a conical one when practicable. No. "7" painted in white figures on buoy.

[50411] No. 118.

Euphrates and Tigris Steam Navigation Company to Foreign Office.—(Received November 26.)

(Confidential.) *3, Salters' Hall Court, Cannon Street, London, November 25, 1912.*

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 16th instant with reference to steam-ship enterprise on the Tigris.

Mr. H. F. B. Lynch visited the Foreign Office on Thursday last and placed before Messrs. Maxwell and Parker all that is known by my board and by myself on the subject of your letter. The board of the Belgian company, in which we are equal shareholders with the Deutsche Bank, have not had under their consideration the question of amalgamating their enterprise with the line of steam-ships maintained by the Turkish Government. As you will see, it is provided in the agreements constituting the Belgian company, formed for the purpose of conveying the material of the Bagdad Railway Company, that is shall be open to the Turkish Government to take one-third share enterprise, in which case the present company, registered in Brussels, may have to take the form of a Turkish company with the same objects.

As regards the proposals which you inform us have been laid before the Secretary of State for the absorption by a Belgian group of the Turkish Government steamers and for the amalgamation of the other steam-ship interests on the Tigris, we have not been approached in this matter, though we have heard privately that something of the kind is on foot under the auspices of the National Bank of Turkey. We should not favour a combination of this kind. It will be within your recollection that this company have spent a considerable amount of money—and its directors have exerted great and protracted personal efforts—in conducting negotiations with the Turkish Government, at the instance of His Majesty's Government, for the purpose of consolidating and improving the steam-ship service on the Tigris. These negotiations were brought to the state of completion; but the Turkish Government withdrew at the last moment, it is believed owing to the opposition of German diplomacy at Constantinople. Under these circumstances and as this company is able to find all the necessary capital, we trust that His Majesty's Government will abstain from favouring the introduction of British capital from other sources to the detriment of the interests of this company.

His Majesty's Government may rest assured that we should not fail to consult our Foreign Office at an early stage in case we should contemplate any change in the basis of the negotiations with the Turkish Government to which we have referred, or in case we should be approached by other parties with a view to effecting a change in the *status quo* on the Tigris. At the same time we should be obliged if His Majesty's Government would keep us informed at an early stage of any contemplated changes which come to their notice, or in case His Majesty's Government should at any time consider the moment favourable for negotiation with the Turkish Government.

I have, &c.

FREDK. S. PARRY, *Secretary*

[50558] No. 119.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received November 27.)

THE Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and forwards herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, copy of enclosures in a letter from the Foreign Secretary to the Government of India, dated the 24th October, 1912, relative to Sheikh of Abu Dhabi.

India Office, November 26, 1912.

Enclosure in No. 119.

Lieutenant-Colonel Sir P. Cox to Government of India.

October 16, 1912.

(Telegraphic.)

YOUR despatch dated 4th July.

I regret to report Sheikh Tahnoon-biu-Zaid, Sheikh of Abu Dhabi, died 14th October. Details of succession, &c., in due course.

[49186] No. 120.

Foreign Office to Admiralty.

(Confidential.)

Sir, *Foreign Office, November 28, 1912.*

I AM directed by Secretary Sir E. Grey to refer to your letter of the 18th instant on the subject of the oil-bearing fields of Mesopotamia and Persia.

In the last paragraph of that letter you intimated that at the earliest possible moment a further communication would be addressed to this department dealing with the points raised in the Foreign Office letter of the 15th November.

As was indicated at the recent meeting of the Interdepartmental Committee, the result of refusal on the part of His Majesty's Government to assist the Anglo-Persian Oil Company, or to come to some arrangement with them, will probably be its absorption into a foreign controlled trust, covering, in addition to other areas, the Mesopotamian as well as all the Persian oilfields, the latter being at present the monopoly of the Anglo-Persian Oil Company and the most important British concession in Persia.

The political results of this amalgamation of interests may be of a far-reaching character, and will affect this country, as Sir E. Grey is given to understand that some of the most important fields are on the shores of the Persian Gulf.

From this point of view, Sir E. Grey was disappointed to learn from Sir A. Nicolson that the Director of Contracts was not prepared to recommend acceptance of Mr. Greenway's proposals. He is unaware, however, if the Lords Commissioners are desirous of negotiating with the company, or if they are indifferent whether or no it is absorbed into the Shell Corporation. He admits that this is primarily a matter for the decision of the Lords Commissioners, as, in the event of the eventual exclusive use of oil fuel in His Majesty's navy, it will become a matter of vital necessity to ensure an adequate supply for the needs of the country.

As the question has an intimate connection with others affecting the policy of His Majesty's Government in Persia, he would be glad to know the final decision of the Lords Commissioners as soon as they are in a position to give it.

It is clear that diplomatic assistance alone will be useless in preserving the independence of the Anglo-Persian Oil Company. It is pecuniary assistance in some form that they require; whether this should be given depends upon considerations that the Foreign Office cannot decide, but upon the decision that is given must depend the action of the Foreign Office. If there are not sufficient public grounds on which to give the Anglo-Persian Oil Company more than diplomatic support, the Foreign Office cannot urge them to hold out against advantageous invitations to throw in their lot with the Shell combine.

I am, &c.

LOUIS MALLET.

[51002] No. 121.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 29.)

(No. 693.)

(Telegraphic.) R. *Constantinople, November 29, 1912.*

YOUR telegram No. 1069 of 25th November: Mesopotamian irrigation.

The Administrator of Public Works has promised to Mr. Eady that payment will be made, but cannot fix date.

Matter is closely bound up with modification of contract in connection with responsibility for clause which the Turkish Government has been pressing, and respecting which Mr. Eady is still awaiting a reply from London. Latter considers proposal a fair one.

[51110] No. 122.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 30.)

(No. 998.)

Sir, *Constantinople, November 26, 1912.*

I HAVE the honour to forward to you herewith copy of a despatch from His Majesty's consul at Jerusalem, reporting on a visit of inspection paid by Sir W.

Willcocks to the country in the Jordan Valley, in the interests of a wealthy Syrian established in Egypt.

I have, &c.
GERARD LOWTHER.

Enclosure in No. 122.

Consul McGregor to Sir G. Lowther.

(No. 90. Confidential.)

Sir, *Jerusalem, November* 12, 1912.

I HAVE the honour to report to your Excellency that Sir William Willcocks, who passed through Jerusalem two days ago, has for the last three weeks been engaged in inspecting the country in the Jordan Valley between Beisan and Jericho on behalf of Lutfullah Pasha, a wealthy Syrian established in Egypt, who is said to have made a conditional offer to the Turkish Government for the purchase of the lands formerly belonging to the Civil List in that district, but now appropriated by the State.

Sir William Willcocks, who was ostensibly travelling through the country with two of Lutfullah Pasha's sons for purposes of sport, and was provided with letters of introduction from the Central Government, informs me confidentially that, although he has not yet had time to analyse samples of soil, he has formed a most favourable impression of the possibilities of the country visited, and considers that with a comparatively trifling outlay, 30,000 acres of land could soon be brought under cultivation. On account of the lowness of the Jordan bed, the waters of that river could not be easily utilised, but abundant springs are numerous, and with a little contour work, storage would be a simple matter, owing to the conformation of the land.

I understand that Lutfullah Pasha is a Russian protégé.

I have, &c.
P. J. C. McGREGOR.

[51157] No. 123.

Balkan Committee to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 30.)

Queen Anne's Chambers, Westminster,
London, November 29, 1912.

Sir,

ARMENIA.

I am instructed to forward to you the enclosed memorandum on the subject of the future of Armenia, and most earnestly to entreat that you will read it and give it your early consideration.

I am instructed also to ask if you would kindly receive a deputation of three or four persons, who would lay before you in greater fulness and detail the views of the special committee that has been just formed to watch and promote the interests of Armenia in the approaching settlement after the war.

I am, &c.
ARTHUR G. SYMONDS.

Enclosure in No. 123.

Memorandum on the Future of Armenia.

WHILE the subject Christian populations of the Turkish Empire in Europe are rejoicing in their dearly bought freedom, their Christian brethren and sisters in Armenia are filled with gloomy anticipations of the fate that awaits them. Driven out of Europe, the Turks will swarm into Asia Minor, and the hands that have been forced to drop the reins of government over Macedonians, Serbs, and Greeks will tighten their grasp on the Armenians. Baulked of their prey among the former, filled with hatred and fury against the Giaours who have defeated them, they will be tempted to wreak their vengeance on the hapless and helpless Christians whom Allah has still left

in their power. It was always so in the past; it will be so in the future—and in the near future—unless it be prevented, and to prevent it is the bounden duty of all the Powers, but especially of Great Britain.

By article 61 of the Treaty of Berlin, "the Sublime Porte undertook to carry out, without further delay, the improvements and reforms demanded by local requirements in the provinces inhabited by the Armenians, and to guarantee their security against the Circassians and Kurds"; and it promised "periodically to make known the steps taken to this effect to the Powers, who will superintend their application." Never were fairer promises made—never more flagrantly broken. No "reforms" have ever been introduced. The "local requirements" have been studiously ignored. The only step taken in the direction of "guaranteeing the security" of the Armenians against the Circassians and Kurds was the scandalous organisation of the Hamidzyeh, or body of irregular Kurdish cavalry, against which the British consuls emphatically protested, but in vain. The Powers did not "superintend the application" of the promised reforms, for no reforms were ever applied.

That there was at first a serious intention on the part of the British Government to enforce the observation of article 61, is proved by the despatches of Lord Salisbury in 1878, and again in 1880, when the Porte was called upon to execute its provisions without delay. To this demand the answer came in the shape of an elaborate scheme of village communes and mayors for Armenia, which, as our consul at Sivas, Colonel Chermside, said, failed to recognise "the rudimentary and radical nature of the reforms most needed, viz., security, destruction of local influence, cheap and prompt justice, and the taxation of individuals." Its cardinal fault was the maintenance of the principle of centralisation, and it was roundly condemned by the Powers jointly, who submitted an alternative scheme which the Porte accepted. But Earl Granville, then Foreign Secretary, urged that "without European supervision it was greatly to be feared that all attempts at reform would prove abortive."

After the failure of another attempt, in 1881, by Great Britain to get the Powers to press the Porte to carry out the provisions of article 61, the lot of the Armenians went from bad to worse, and for ten long years they were subjected to every species of cruelty and oppression, culminating in the massacre at Sassun. In 1891 another effort was made by Great Britain to unite the Powers to take some action, and in 1895 a memorandum and project of reforms of a more elaborate character were submitted to the Porte. But the Sultan not only boldly rejected it, but showed his contempt for the Powers—who, he well knew, were by no means united—by the massacre of several thousand Armenians in the streets of Constantinople. This was followed by massacres at Trebizond, Ak-hisser, Sivas, Kharput, Bitlis, Zeitun, Marach, Urfa, Aintab, Mush, and many other places. Of these massacres Vice-Consul Fitzmaurice declared that "both Mussulmans and non-Mussulmans assert that the Government wished them to take place, and that if it had not so wished, they could not have taken place." It was, too, in connection with these massacres that violation of women was deliberately adopted as an effective method of extermination, and "by an organised system of outrage it was determined that no Armenian women should become the mother of an Armenian child." Another massacre in Constantinople in 1896, followed by massacres at Sivas, Kharput, and other places in Armenia, led Lord Salisbury to make one last effort to bring the Powers into line, and evoked that last great public speech of Mr. Gladstone at Liverpool, when he declared that Great Britain ought to break off diplomatic relations with the Porte.

The tale thus told is not complete, and that which remains to be told enhances terribly the responsibility of this country for the last thirty-four years of Armenia's misery. By the Cyprus Convention, which Great Britain concluded with the Porte on the very day on which she agreed to take part in the Berlin Congress, she undertook in her individual capacity, and not as a member of the concert of Europe, obligations for the good government of the Asiatic provinces of the Turkish Empire. In return for the pledge given by Great Britain to assist Turkey in resisting Russian aggression in Asia, the Sultan promised to "introduce necessary reforms, to be agreed upon later by the two Powers, into the government and for the protection of the Christians and other subjects of the Porte in these territories; and in order to enable England to make necessary provision for executing her engagements, His Imperial Majesty consented to assign the Island of Cyprus to be occupied and administered by England." This stipulation gave to Great Britain a separate right, and imposed on her a special obligation, to compel the Porte to carry out the promised reforms. As M. Waddington said in one of his despatches, the French Government admitted that "England had acquired a right to intervene henceforth actively in the administration of all the

territories of Asia subject to Ottoman jurisdiction." Who can say that she has exercised that right?

What is the practical remedy that we would propose? Simply that the system of government established in the Lebanon by the statute of 1864 should be applied to Armenia. Under that statute the governor is nominated by the Sultan, but only after agreement with the Ambassadors of the great Powers at Constantinople, which is practically tantamount to his election by the unanimous vote of the Ambassadors. He is appointed for five years, and cannot be removed by the Sultan during that period without the consent of the Ambassadors. He is assisted by an administrative council, whose members—twelve in number, divided between the different races and religions in proportion to their importance—are elected by the village sheikhs, who act as local justices of the peace. The council has control over the finances, which are managed with a success which makes the Lebanon a prosperous province, while the administration of justice affords ample proof of the advantages of decentralisation and freedom from the control and interference of the pashas at Constantinople. Crete, Samos, Eastern Roumelia, when under the control of the European Commission, all afford examples, similar to that of the Lebanon, of the magic influence of autonomy in internal administration exercised under the protection and guarantee of European control. Is there any reason to doubt that the same system applied to Armenia would make that province prosperous and contented?

And if such a result could be achieved, England's direct gain would be great, for Armenia, with its thrifty peasants and keen merchants and well-watered soil, is potentially a rich market for the manufactures of this country, as the thriving Armenian colonies in Manchester and Smyrna will testify; and if its people could only enjoy peace and security of life and property, and were only permitted to labour and trade for their own advantage, and not to enrich their oppressors, the commerce of the country would rapidly increase.

We do not ask for Armenia—the Armenians themselves do not ask for it—absolute independence or severance from the Turkish Empire. On geographical and ethnological grounds it must remain a part of Turkey in Asia, so long as that country exists. We should greatly regret to see it absorbed by Russia. We believe that it can, under good government, become a prosperous and contented portion of the Turkish dominions. But we cannot and must not leave it unheeded at the present juncture of affairs. For the honour of England, so deeply pledged to its defence; in the cause of civilisation, so rudely checked there by barbarous misgovernment; in the name of Christianity, for which it has supplied so many martyrs; for the sake of humanity, so cruelly outraged by the torturing of its men, the violation of its women, the slaughter of its children, we appeal that full and due consideration be given now to the fate of Armenia.

[51568] No. 124.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received December 3.)

THE Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and forwards herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, copy of a telegram from the Viceroy, dated the 2nd December, 1912, regarding Abu Musa.

India Office, December 3, 1912.

Enclosure in No. 124.

Government of India to the Marquess of Crewe.

(Telegraphic.) P. *December 2, 1912.*

WITH reference to letter from Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, dated 15th December, 1911, to German Ambassador regarding Abu Musa (copy of which was enclosed in letter dated 22nd idem from the Secretary, Political Department), I request that if you are intending, pending receipt of the German answer to the British Govern-

ment's second memorandum, to lengthen Wönckhaus's period of grace, you will not take action before letter of 3rd ultimo from political resident, Persian Gulf, reaches you. His views meet with my concurrence. The letter will be dispatched with a letter from Secretary, Foreign Department, by next mail.

[50196] No. 125.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Lowther.

(No. 548.)

Sir, *Foreign Office, December 3, 1912.*

I HAVE received, and read with interest, Mr. Marling's despatch No. 770 of the 11th September in which he submits certain observations on article 16 of the draft convention for the establishment of a Shatt-el-Arab navigation commission; and on paragraph 5 of a letter which, by my direction, Sir L. Mallet addressed to the Under-Secretary of State for India on the 21st August.

I think that Mr. Marling is under some misconception as to the object which His Majesty's Government have in view. They have no desire to veto communication between the local authorities and the commission; on the contrary, they are persuaded that such communication must, in practice, prove indispensable, but they attach great importance to securing to the commission the right to correspond direct with the central authorities, and they consider that it is essential to the success of the commission that it should not be dependent on the decisions of, or hampered by the obstruction of, arbitrary local officials.

I request that your Excellency will bring this despatch to the notice of Mr. Marling on his return to his post.

I am, &c.
E. GREY.

[51706] No. 126.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 4.)

(No. 1006.)

Sir, *Constantinople, November 29, 1912.*

I HAVE the honour to forward herewith a despatch from His Majesty's consul at Erzeroum, giving general observations on the situation in that district.

I have, &c.
GERARD LOWTHER.

Enclosure in No. 126.

Consul Monahan to Sir G. Lowther.

(No. 84.)

Sir, *Erzeroum, November 2, 1912.*

I HAVE the honour to submit some general observations on Armenians and other races of this consular district, suggested chiefly by my experience of the six months' warmer season in Erzeroum town and neighbourhood.

First, as to Erzeroum town. This is an important, fairly prosperous, distributing trade centre, with a population of perhaps 50,000, perhaps a third of whom are Armenians. The Armenian traders have thoroughly recovered from the pillage of 1895, and the shops, which are all small, are now mostly kept by Armenians. The few wholesale merchants are also nearly all Armenians. There are no rich merchants. Armenians are not to any great extent money-lenders in Erzeroum town. I doubt whether any trader has a capital of more than 10,000*l*. The two or three rich men of the town are Moslem landowners and Government contractors, who make little show of wealth and are of somewhat primitive habits. The houses of the town are mostly of two stories; that is, a ground floor and one storey, the remainder being of the one ground floor only. Neither inside nor outside are they beautiful or convenient, and most of them look as though constructed by gigantic beavers, of rough stones, mud, beams, and occasionally in part of primitive bricks. The streets can hardly be said to be paved or lighted; some of them are like rough country roads, not repaired for many

years past, and also stretches of very old and very rough slab pavement, and some miserable oil lamps occur. Many of the chief streets are on slopes, and have one or two gutters, through which, fortunately, water is generally flowing. These gutters may almost be called small open sewers, as much of the house filth is poured into them. Their fertilising waters find their way into the vegetable gardens, which fill much space between houses and the lower or northern part of the fortifications. The great sewer is the open ravine, the water of which, banked and partly choked with filth, passes sluggishly between two rows of houses, then passes under some houses, and finally issues into those vegetable gardens, and tumbles in small cascades into the plain below the fortifications. Many of the houses have cesspools, which sometimes cause a bad smell in the houses, and which are emptied about once a year by men, who are paid by the householders, for the purpose, and who deposit the contents in the gardens and plain. Much filth, also, is deposited in the streets, and, when not already blown away, is removed to the same destinations by municipal carts at intervals of a week or two.

The water supply should be good, but, as it comes from the mountains in defective old wooden pipes, is much contaminated. The town is still said to be healthy, and certainly the mountain air is so invigorating as not to be poisoned even by this town, but in the absence of any statistics the healthiness will be doubted by any one who has experienced the flies, stenches, and dust, very much of it powdered dung, of the long warmer seasons, and can distinguish between the townspeople and the villagers. A watering cart was for a short time attempted this year, but it soon broke down and disappeared. It would be interesting to know what are the subjects of deliberation of the municipal council, consisting of seven Moslems and one Armenian. The municipal taxes are the market weighing dues, taxes on sales of animals, and the tolls paid at the town gates by every entering traveller not on foot and on all entering merchandise. Each house also pays 12 piastres (about 2s.) a-year, but that is understood to be for road making only. It is said that the members of the municipality enrich themselves; they get no pay.

In the highest part of the town there is a Turkish quarter of some hundreds of miserable shapeless human antheaps and man-burrows, such as are spoken of by travellers in this part of Kurdistan. Some are dug out in the slopes of cemeteries so that the inhabitants are living in the graves of the dead. An American medical lady missionary who visits these dwellings to attend women in childbirth tells me that in some of them there is absolutely no furniture but a little matting, and that the inhabitants to a great extent live by collecting and preparing dung cakes for fuel. The dung cakes are a great feature of the quarter, stacks of them, rows of them, or, according to the other mode of preparation, irregular round ones flattened on to the mud walls, where they are left stuck to dry. I have occasionally walked through this quarter, but having been three times hit in the back by small stones thrown by boys, and having been repeatedly cursed by them, I think it better to go there no more. The women and children are most fanatical; the hags seen there may be women who, as is related, killed Russian wounded in 1877. The men are never insulting. The American lady tells me that she is perfectly safe there, and that the people are truly grateful to her. It is a proof of the real goodness in the Turks that these miserably poor men are so little criminal, and will, I am sure, not attack nor rob Christians unless excited by extreme hunger, as they were to murder the Armenian forestaller of grain in September 1907, or by agents of Government. Bread being extraordinarily cheap, there is, I think, just now no such danger. The Moslem cemeteries of Erzeroum are a disgrace to Islam; very many of the tombstones are dilapidated and lean in different directions, often with clothes hung to dry on them, and dogs are to be seen sniffing and scratching at the graves. In one of these cemeteries there is a tomb with two tall grey stones decently erect. The grave between them is thickly strewn with little rags, and flat stones leaning against the two tombstones protect the lighted candles that are on some nights placed there. These rags and candles are tokens of reverence for a holy place. I have seen men and women stand to pray there, and earth is often taken from the grave to cure various diseases. A Turkish officer has solemnly told an acquaintance of mine that this earth is much better for rheumatism than any of the hot baths that are resorted to. This is the grave of the Turkish sergeant who, in the reactionary movement of the spring of 1909, murdered an Armenian and some officers, and was hanged for it a year later in Erzeroum (see Mr. Consul McGregor's despatch No. 3 of the 29th January, 1911). Moslem education does not seem satisfactory. I lately attended the speech-day of the Government high school here, and there seemed to be no proof of the pupils having learnt anything worth learning. Elsewhere I have

seen on these occasions youths of 16 or 17 called up to do for our edification sums in compound addition, or to perform some simple chemical experiment, but here there was nothing but rants read out by the youths in unnatural voices in largely incomprehensible Turkish about living, working, and dying for our country, about the miserable Italians, and so forth. There are about 200 pupils from 13 to 17 years of age, and about 100 seemed to get prizes for one or two of these subjects, so far as I can remember the list, religion or theology, Turkish, Arabic, Turkish history, algebra, arithmetic, and technical science, by which is understood to be chiefly meant carpentry. I noticed that an Armenian boy—there are two or three such in the school—alone got a prize in French. Also a poem by the then vali, who was present, the eminent *littérateur*, Mehmet Amin Bey, in the new simple Turkish language which he affects, was recited. It is a frigid production called "the blacksmith," about hammering the rough raw material of Turkey into noble and beautiful forms. Though it may seem to be venturing out of my depth, I venture to think that the Turkish language with its original rough and limited vocabulary, and its clumsy wooden monotony of structure, however the structure may be filled out with Arabic and Persian, cannot have an important literature.

Off the neglected little so-called public garden a small space has been enclosed for a gymnastic club of a good many Armenian and some Turkish youths, who exercise themselves there on swings and crossbars. On the occasion of the opening of this institution on the 30th June last Mehmet Amin Bey made the following speech:—

"Five thousand years ago" (this apparently being some novel ethnographical view of his Excellency) "our ancestors came into this our sacred country. They were heroes possessing the crushing strength of the elephant of India, the force of the lion of Africa, the swiftness of the horse of Arabia, and the keenness and brightness of the eye of the eagle of the Caucasus. We, however, became unlike them, for tyranny abated the strength of our arms and the swiftness of our legs, and also our mental power, so that we became slaves. The constitution, however, put a new life into our schools, so that we shall have successors worthy of our ancestors. The mountains and valleys of this land need sinewy arms, healthy bodies, and strong minds, in order to use the Ottoman plough and sword," &c.

That one of the intellectuals of a people, being also governor of a province, should make such a speech seems remarkable. There is in Erzeroum one little Turkish book-shop, and in it, besides an interminable history of Turkey, I have seen nothing but korans and religious works. The only customers I have seen there have been sour-looking mollahs. Turks, though they seldom know much of the Koran, are still, even when freethinkers, much imbued with koranic, or supposed koranic, doctrines—more so, I think, than well-educated Arabs, who can read and appreciate the book. There is here one very little Armenian book-shop, kept by a local Tashnagist. Its stock chiefly consists of little Armenian histories and of socialistic treatises. I notice the life of George Ferrer, the Spanish Anarchist or Socialist martyr, in Armenian. Such works seem quite out of place here, where there is no capitalism and no industrialism.

The great Gregorian Armenian school, the Samssarian school, was closed for some months last summer by the governing body in Constantinople, understood to be under the presidency of the present Minister of Foreign Affairs, and was ordered to be transferred to Sivas. This was in consequence of the squabbles and disorders in Erzeroum. The pupils were, I understand, about one hundred boarders of from 15 to 20 years of age, from various parts, and about one hundred day boys, most of them under 15, from Erzeroum town. The older pupils refused to do more than sit at lectures, taking no notes. The irreligious, revolutionary Tashnagists wished to get control of the school. The Armenian Bishop of Erzeroum, who was *ex officio* president of the local directing board, opposed them, and left Erzeroum five months ago on a holiday for some place near Samsun, whence he is not expected to return. The furniture, books, &c., of the school were packed and were about to be sent off to Sivas, but an Armenian mob prevented them being put on the carts. The local Turkish authorities seem to have received some order in the matter, but they have not interfered. Most of the teachers have left Erzeroum, but the school has been reopened as a comparatively small day school by a local committee. The question is now in dispute whether this committee can, under the will of the founder, Samssarian, have any right to the furniture, books, stuffed animals, bust of the founder, and so forth. Not very much seems to have been learnt in the school, its advanced students in algebra lately not knowing what the binomial theorem was; and twenty years ago (as related by

Mr. H. F. B. Lynch) not being able to tell the product of $x+y \times x-y$. There are also many very elementary Gregorian schools in the town and villages, the village ones having lately much increased in number.

The bishop has, as I have said, left, and nearly all the Armenian lay council of Erzeroum are now Tashnagists, who are quite out of harmony with the peasantry and with the more substantial townspeople. The Armenian Catholics, a small community, have also been squabbling among themselves. About nine years ago the bishop Kechourian began to be accused of embezzling large sums which he collected from the charitable in Europe, and he is supposed to have continued his embezzlements until they have amounted to a sum of many thousands of pounds. He resigned under pressure, and a papal decree was obtained appointing another bishop named Melchisedekian, who arrived last July, but found the episcopal palace occupied by some sturdy young men of the flock, who barred the doors and would not allow him to enter. A small riot was threatened, but police came, got the young men out of the palace, and locked it up, so that the two rival bishops remain in lodgings outside. The new bishop has not been allowed by the local Government to officiate as bishop in the cathedral, having no firman, nor does the old bishop, who is still recognised by the Government, ever go to it. The community, however, do not seem to be much disturbed by this state of things.

I will now pass to the Armenian peasantry. They live in filthy little villages or rather jumbles of houses. To the north of Erzeroum these are mostly houses of four walls and a roof. Elsewhere in the vilayet the man-burrows dug out in the slopes and in mounds prevail. The peculiarity of life in these villages is that for about six cold months of the year, when the country is generally deep in snow, no man does any work at all except look after the beasts kept shut up all the time, and pile up dung to be ready in the spring to be prepared for fuel. As exceptions, it may be mentioned that some villagers near Erzeroum will occasionally bring into the town in winter some fuel and fodder and a few mats and pieces of woollen cloth for sale. This restful life, the food which was until recent times nearly always most abundant, the good air, and Christian morality have no doubt built up the hardy healthiness and heavy strength of these peasants. The Erzeroum town Armenians also indulge to some extent in the hibernating habit, but in the conditions of town life it naturally does not agree with them so well, and they mostly become hollow-cheeked and unhealthy looking, though still strong. The Turkish villagers, who form the majority of the population of the vilayet, live much like the Armenian villagers, but are rather poorer and much less enterprising and energetic, emigrating comparatively little. From the vilayet over 5,000, mostly Armenians, every year go to Russia to work for a year or two or often much longer; and a perhaps large number go every year to Constantinople and a somewhat smaller number to America. The population of the vilayet may be very roughly estimated at 600,000, of whom perhaps 150,000 to 200,000 are Armenians, 100,000 to 150,000 Kurds, and the rest Turks. The Kurdish villages are even dirtier than the Armenian and probably poorer; Moslem villages, in spite of land grabbing from Christians, have not grown rich. The Kurds of the vilayet live in tents in summer, and are formed in tribes, each under a chief, but are agricultural, not nomads. They are in general not dangerous, though small robber bands are occasionally formed from among them. They are good cheerful workers, hospitable, and not fanatical, allowing their women unveiled freedom, which the Turkish villagers do not allow. I may mention here the proclamation of the Sheikh-ul-Islam which appeared a few months ago on the walls of Erzeroum strictly enjoining all Moslem women to be veiled, the practice, according to the proclamation, being approved of by the best doctors of Europe.

The Kurds have a comparatively refined appearance, though nearly all absolutely uneducated, and though their language is without letters. The 600 of them who were in this town lately for training for the tribal light cavalry enlivened a little the prevailing gloom of Erzeroum with their dances and songs and their enormously wide gaily embroidered trousers and high white caps, and did no harm to anyone. The Kurds are said to be of doubtful value as soldiers. Even the wilder ones further south, who are much oppressed by their own brigand chiefs, are certainly easy to govern.

The Armenians are, or can be, a martial race, as they repeatedly showed in the middle ages, and again, though after long centuries of disarmed subjection in modern times in the Russian service and as revolutionary outlaws. Their industry and business aptitudes are well known, and they are not very untrustworthy, but they unite the vanity of the peacock with the coarseness of the buffalo, and for sullen sulky obstinancy are, I should say, unrivalled. They are also extremely factious among themselves, and,

as was observed by Sir R. Burton, to a man, restless spies. All that Mr. H. F. B. Lynch, that most valuable authority, says about the ancient Armenian culture being stifled by the Russian bureaucracy, about the Armenians preferring the bondage of the body in Turkey to the bondage of the spirit on Russia, and about the Armenians in Russia having to retire within themselves to escape moral and mental annihilation may, I think, now be disregarded. They prosper greatly in Russia as anyone may see in a short journey through the Caucasus, and a typical one whom I know, a stout cunning looking man, who has come back to swagger among his native dung-hills in European clothes and make some more money by land-buying and usury, has built in his village on Erzeroum plain a decent looking house, the only one I have seen in a village in this country, and has decorated it with a little hideous European upholstery, though he still has a platform in his cowstable, on which he and his family will huddle together in winter and keep themselves warm amid the congenial fumes. He has made a fortune by supplying bread to military hospitals in Manchuria during the Russo-Japanese war, and his brother and partner still keeps up the bakery business in Rostov in Russia. There are several others like him in Erzeroum villages. All speak a coarsened Russian. In Russia higher education is, I understand, allowed to be obtained through the medium of the Russian language only, the great grievance dwelt on by Mr. Lynch—not that those peasants whom I have mentioned have had any thought of higher education. Not many Armenians want higher education, and it is truly said that they cannot get it in Turkey through the medium of the Armenian language either. Armenians here from the Caucasus say that Russian is the language by which money can be made, and that those who care for the Armenian literary language are such people as poor village schoolmasters. The harsh Armenian language does not spread; it has been lost by the armenians in southern and western Anotolia, and it has, I understand, no literature except some monkish books of little value in a now hardly understood form of the language which are little read.

Judging from the attitude of the Russian consulate-general here, the Russian authorities are certainly now favouring Armenians, even the revolutionary refugees, to whom the Russian vice-consul at Bitlis in an unguarded moment lately held out the threat that they would be hanged when the Russians came there. The Armenian inhabitants of what is called the great Armenian tableland in Turkey (the vilayets of Van, Bitlis, and Erzeroum, and parts of the vilayets of Kharput and Diarbekir) are perhaps half a million, and are in the region as a whole and in almost every sub-district in the minority.*

The Armenians of the adjacent Russian territory of Trans-Caucasia are about 2,000,000, and in that territory are again in the minority. There is strong evidence that the Russians are at least shutting their eyes to the activity of Kurdish brigands and Kurdish autonomists on the Van-Persian frontier (see my despatch No. 80 of the 5th instant), the desire of the Russians being probably not the impossible Kurdish autonomy, but simply to weaken Turkey, but the Turks also fail to deal properly with Kurds who are robbing and murdering Armenians and occasionally Moslems in Van and Bitlis vilayets, and to some extent in Erzeroum vilayet. Turkey is not directly persecuting or oppressing Armenians, but seems for the present unable to govern tolerably her part of the Armenian tableland; to get any roads made, the French company having this autumn practically stopped work; to enforce a rule thoroughly enforced in Russia against the use of oxcarts with cutting iron wheels which quickly spoil any road; to preserve woods; to drain feverish little marshes; to arrange for a proper water supply, or for the most elementary cleanliness or sanitation; to encourage agriculture which has declined with a consequent rise of prices, for one reason that so many of the Armenian peasants have been killed or dispossessed or have left the country, and which might perhaps be improved if dung could be used for manure and not all for fuel; unable to do anything or get anything done for the development of the resources of the country. She seems, and this is perhaps the most important point, unable or unwilling to repress crime, which is such that no native ventures on any considerable agricultural stock-raising, industrial, or commercial enterprise. The restoration of land grabbed during the last twenty-five years by Moslems from Armenians does not seem to be now expected by the latter, who seemed resigned to the loss, or at least not to make of it a principal grievance. The railway from Trebizond to Erzeroum is understood to be vetoed by the Russian Government, who will have a

* The population does not seem to increase, which fact a very experienced foreign observer attributes to high mortality, especially among infants, to great emigration especially of Armenians, and to the rather common practice, in Erzeroum town at least, of procuring abortion.

railway to within 30 miles of the frontier next spring, and will have it extended to the frontier in a year or two. Perhaps things may change after the present war, tidings of which are eagerly awaited here by the native Christians, and the very few Europeans, all hoping that the Turkish military arrogance may now finally be humbled. But if Turkish incompetence continues, there seems to be but one solution, and it will be for enterprises connected with this part of the country to come to terms with Russia.

I have, &c.
J. H. MONAHAN.

[51708] No. 127.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 4.)

(No. 1008.)
Sir,

Constantinople, November 29, 1912.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 984 of the 21st instant, I have the honour to forward herewith a despatch from His Majesty's consul-general at Beirout reporting on the continued feeling of uneasiness in the town and vilayet of Beirout.

A copy of Mr. Cumberbatch's despatch No. 62 of the 18th October, 1911 was forwarded to you in my despatch No. 758 of the 29th October, 1911.

I have, &c.
GERARD LOWTHER.

Enclosure in No. 127.

Consul-General Cumberbatch to Sir G. Lowther.

(No. 78.)
Sir,

Beirout, November 21, 1912.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 76, Confidential, of the 14th November on the situation in Beirout, caused by the unsettled state of things in the country in general, I have the honour to state that everything is keeping quiet at Beirout where, however, the pro-Anglo-Egyptian and anti-French agitation is spreading.

Every precaution is being taken by the Governor-General and the military commandant against disorders arising, and they appear most anxious to show their determination to prevent any outbreak for fear of providing a pretext for foreign intervention, suggested in their minds by the presence of the foreign war-ships in these waters.

The scanty and generally unreliable news from the seat of war and the possible consequences to Turkey of the campaign, are eagerly discussed by the public, but so far the Moslem newspapers of Beirout have refrained from publishing inflammatory articles, as has been reported from some places in the interior. The only case in this vilayet approaching incitement of Moslems against Christians is reported by Mr. Vice-Consul Vitali at Lattakia, where the editor of the newspaper "Al Lazikieh" and Sahal Pasha, the exiled Indian prince referred to in my despatch No. 62 of the 18th October, 1911, have been somewhat active in rousing the religious fanaticism of Moslems, the former in the columns of his paper and the latter in a widely distributed printed document in which religious rather than patriotic feelings are appealed to in very strong terms.

From Tripoli Commander Staple Cotton, of His Majesty's ship "Barham," now at Alexandretta, reported on the 16th instant that all was quiet there and that his first visit to that port on the 10th instant had had a very good effect on the Moslem inhabitants, who, though inclined to show little or no enthusiasm for the war against the Balkan States and very little sympathy for the Government in its troubles, were being stirred up by some newspapers, and especially by the publication of the Sheikh-ul-Islam's appeal to the ulemas, to follow the example of Christian priests in the enemies' armies by going to the front to encourage the defenders of the Mahommedan faith, thereby suggesting the existence of a holy war of Cross *versus* Crescent, in which all good Moslems were exhorted to join. It is this sort of publication that alarms the Christian inhabitants, whom sad experience has shown how easy it is to rouse Moslems to action if given a lead from high quarters.

At Sidon, beyond the natural uneasiness among Christians, Mr. Vice-Consul F. Abela has not had occasion to report any alarming attitude on the part of the Moslems in

that town, and the short visit of His Majesty's ship "Prometheus" to that port last week did no harm.

From Haifa Mr. Vice-Consul F. Abela reports that the cause of uneasiness there was the news that the Moslems were purchasing arms and ammunition in all directions, but he said the presence of the German cruiser "Geier" had a calming effect, though the Germans are not popular in that district.

Mr. Abela and his French colleague had friendly interviews with the mutessarif at Acre and with some Moslem notables, and were assured by them that they would do all in their power to prevent any attack on Christians, which they sincerely deprecated as most undesirable at any time, and especially at the present critical moment.

At the present moment the war-ships at Beirout are His Majesty's ship "Prometheus" and the French cruisers "Henri IV" and "Montcalm," and at Haifa the German cruiser "Geier." His Majesty's ship "Barham" remains for the present at Alexandretta with the German cruiser "Breslau."

I have, &c.
H. A. CUMBERBATCH.

[51710] No. 128.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 4.)

(No. 1010. Confidential.)
Sir,

Constantinople, November 29, 1912.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 957 of the 10th instant, relative to the condition of affairs in Eastern Anatolia, I have the honour to state that information received from the dragoman of the British vice-consulate at Van points to some recrudescence of the alleged intrigues by certain Kurdish chieftains with Russian agents, which, as reported in the last paragraph of Mr. Marling's despatch No. 741 of the 4th September last, would seem to be managed by members of the Bedrkhan clan with a view to profiting by the situation in European Turkey in order to establish an autonomous Kurdistan.

Of the two Hekkiari Kurdish chiefs of Shemsdinan, Sheikh Taha and his cousin Sheikh Abdulla, who were pardoned, and were to return to Van with the present vali, Izzet Bey, only one, Sheikh Abdullah, has returned. The other, Sheikh Taha, in the meanwhile proceeded to Tiflis, where he is reported to have seen the Bedrkhan Zadé, Abdur Rezzak Bey, who has the reputation of being a Russian agent for promoting the Turkish propaganda. The Ottoman consul at Tiflis warned his Government, and Sheikh Taha was arrested by frontier troops when entering the Van vilayet, but was subsequently rescued by a Persian Kurdish brigand chief, who is supposed to be furnished with arms by the Russian protégé, the Khan of Maku. All attempts to induce Sheikh Taha to return to Turkish territory have failed, while the Ottoman Kurds are reported to be rising against the Government in several places on the frontier. It is even rumoured locally that Abdur Rezzak Bey has received 70,000 rifles from Russia for a Kurdish revolt!

In the week ending the 30th October two Armenians were murdered near lake Van by emissaries of the notorious Kurdish brigand, Seid Bey, one of them being a priest, and the other a Tashnak leader. Two more Armenians are reported to have been subsequently murdered in the same district. As a result of the murder of the Tashnakist leader, a telegram, signed by numerous local Armenians, was sent to Constantinople stating that the people would arm and defend themselves if the Government could not protect them from Kurdish outrages.

Although the state of affairs in the Erzeroum vilayet is apparently normal, the local Erzeroum Armenian newspaper publishes a violent and uncalled for article attacking the Government for its failure to maintain order and security.

In the Diarbekir vilayet, the forcible exactions of the Kurdish chiefs from the Chaldean villagers still continue. Not content with seizing the tithe of the harvest, the Shurdak Kurdish begs have taken possession of the village of Oshsade, threatening the villagers with death. The neighbouring villages would seem to be threatened with a similar fate.

I have, &c.
GERARD LOWTHER.

[51845] No. 129.

Mr. Greenway to Foreign Office.—(Received December 4.)

Winchester House, Old Broad Street, London, December 4, 1912.

Sir,

WITH reference to my recent interviews in connection with the Mesopotamian oil concession I beg to suggest that, pending the decision of the Admiralty in regard to the proposed fuel oil contract, some immediate action should be taken with a view to endeavouring to prevent the Turkish Government from committing themselves irrevocably to the group represented by the Deutsche Bank and the National Bank of Turkey.

It has been suggested that Turkey may in her present difficulties be in urgent need of money, and that the Bank in question may be disposed to offer financial assistance, subject to the condition that they are granted the above concession.

As negotiations in this direction may at any moment be started—if they have not already been the subject of pourparlers—the group which I am representing will esteem it a favour if His Majesty's Government can see their way to instructing Sir G. Lowther to represent to the Turkish Government that, in view of the fact that this concession has been under promise to Mr. D'Arcy for some years past, and of the great amount of time and money which has been expended in the negotiations, His Majesty's Government consider that he has the first claim to it, and therefore that the granting of the concession to any other group would be regarded with great disfavour by the British Government, who have from the first given their full support to Mr. D'Arcy's application.

If His Majesty's Government consider it advisable it might also be indicated that an additional reason for objecting to the concession being granted to the group in question is that the object of the group is prejudicial to both British and Turkish Imperial interests.

With reference to the suggestion that it might facilitate matters were our group also to offer a loan to Turkey, subject to the same condition, I am desired to point out that, though we might be prepared to undertake a properly secured Turkish Government loan of the usual character, it would probably be quite impracticable for us to do so on any security which the Turkish Government are now in a position to offer. It is possible, however, that one of the banks in question may (with the aid of its Government) be disposed to give the required assistance for purely political considerations which, in our case, or in the case of any other British financial group, would not be a marketable commodity.

It is therefore hoped that the friendly support of His Majesty's Government, which the Turkish Government will no doubt desire in the present political situation, will, in itself, be a sufficient inducement to ensure a favourable consideration of the proposed representation.

I have, &c.

C. GREENWAY, *Managing Director*

[51935] No. 130.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received December 5.)

India Office, December 3, 1912.

Dear Sir Louis Mallet,

WITH reference to your call here the other day, I think that the Anglo-Persian Oil Company have to some extent produced a wrong impression in stating that they were negotiating with the Indian Government an important contract for the supply of fuel oil for the railways of India. They suggested early in this year to the Admiralty that it would materially facilitate the working of the company if the Government of India were to adopt oil fuel in substitution for coal on the State railways in Western India, and this suggestion was communicated by the Admiralty to this Office. On receiving it we asked the Admiralty if they could obtain for us a report on the suitability of Persian oil for fuel by one of the first authorities. The Admiralty passed the request on to the company, who employed Sir Boverton Redwood to draw up a report, after the necessary laboratory tests, on the question. On the 8th November we received from the Admiralty Sir Boverton Redwood's report dated 3rd October. The correspondence is now being sent to the Government of India for their consideration.

You will see, therefore, that so far as this Office is concerned there have been no direct official negotiations with the company on the subject. As regards the Government of India, I cannot say that the question of adopting oil fuel has not been considered, but there have been, so far as I am aware, no negotiations with the Anglo-Persian Oil Company. Indeed, the question hardly seems ripe for the discussion of a contract, as there are no locomotives in India fitted to use oil fuel, and in face of the general belief that the price of oil fuel will appreciate greatly in the future any such change could only be decided on after the most careful consideration. Coal, it may be added, is very cheap and plentiful in most parts of India.

Yours sincerely,

T. W. HOLDERNESS.

[51952] No. 131.

Messrs. Murrieta and Co. to Foreign Office.—(Received December 5.)

19, *Great Winchester Street, London, December 5, 1912.*

Sir,

ON the 2nd February last Sir Louis Mallet was good enough to suggest that an enquiry should be made at the Board of Trade with reference to the oilfields in Mesopotamia. This enquiry was duly made on our behalf by Mr. Atkin, but the director of the commercial branch was then unable to supply any information as to the status of Tahsin Pasha, who had proposed to a British syndicate the purchase of his rights in an oil concession, the working of which would be advantageous to commercial enterprise on the Persian Gulf, in which the trading interest of this country has long held a premier position. It was clearly useless to again approach the Board of Trade. We, however, referred the matter to Count Ostrorog, a lawyer of repute at Constantinople, whose report we enclose, and, as the formalities required by the Ottoman Council of State have been complied with, we have the honour to respectfully beg that the Secretary of State may be pleased to give such instructions to His Majesty's Ambassador as may be possible for the purpose of expediting the issue of the papers by the Minister of Mines and Forests.

We are, &c.

MURRIETA AND CO.

Enclosure in No. 131.

Report by Count Ostrorog.

IL a été exposé au soussigné que, en vertu d'un rescrit grand viziriel en date du 9 décembre, 1313 (1897), communiqué par lettre du Ministère des Mines et Forêts, Nemli-Zadé Tahsin Bey, depuis Tahsin Pacha, reçut du vilayet de Bagdad, à la date du 22 janvier, 1313 (1898), un permis de recherches pour les gisements de pétrole pouvant se trouver dans l'étendue du vilayet de Bagdad;

Qu'à une date telle que Tahsin Pacha bénéficiait encore d'un délai de quatre mois et seize jours pour l'accomplissement des travaux de recherches en vue desquels le permis lui avait été délivré, un iradé de l'ex-Sultan Abdul Hamid déclara octroyer à l'Administration de la Cassette privée la concession du domaine minier du vilayet de Bagdad;

Qu'une décision de section du Conseil d'État en date du 30 juin, 1328 (1912), énonce qu'encore que le Règlement minier en vigueur à la date où le permis de recherches général était délivré à Tahsin Pacha stipulât que toute requête à fin d'obtention de permis de recherches devait préciser respectivement, entre autres choses, le liva et le caza dans lequel se trouvait le gisement particulier que l'on sollicitait d'explorer, prescription paraissant exclure un permis de recherches d'une nature aussi générale et imprécise que celui octroyé à Tahsin Pacha pour les gisements de pétrole du vilayet de Bagdad, sans autre spécification, ce néanmoins, le fait qu'un tel permis fut effectivement délivré à Tahsin Pacha par l'autorité compétente, sur examen de la question à Constantinople, et instructions spéciales du grand vizirat, crée, au profit de Tahsin Pacha, un droit acquis à bénéficier du permis de recherches octroyé; que, d'autre part, l'Acte Impérial saisissant au profit de la cassette privée le domaine minier du vilayet de Bagdad, étant contraire tant aux prescriptions du Règlement minier que de tous principes

légaux en général, ne pouvait avoir pour effet de rendre caduc le droit acquis de Tahsin Pacha ; qu'en conséquence il y avait lieu de dire que Tahsin Pacha avait le droit d'exécuter des travaux de recherches pendant un délai égal à celui dont il avait été privé par le fait du prince, c'est-à-dire quatre mois et seize jours ; que, cependant, considérant l'importance de la question, il convenait qu'elle fût examinée en dernier ressort par le Conseil d'État siégeant en séance plénière ;

Que cette séance plénière du Conseil d'État eut lieu, et qu'encore que les conclusions de la délibération intervenue ne fussent pas encore couchées par écrit, il apparaissait que l'Assemblée, tout en retenant les conclusions de la section sur le point que l'octroi de permis de recherches crée un droit acquis au bénéfice de Tahsin Pacha, semblait disposée à déclarer ce droit caduc par la considération qu'il se serait trouvé annulé par l'Acte Impérial déclarant le domaine minier du vilayet de Bagdad concession de la cassette privée.

Ceci exposé, le soussigné a été appelé à émettre un avis sur la question de la valeur, dans la situation ci-dessus exposée, des droits de Tahsin Pacha à la recherche de gisements pétrolifères dans le vilayet de Bagdad.

Il apparaît au soussigné que la question générale ci-dessus posée enveloppe les deux questions particulières suivantes :—

1. Tahsin Pacha a-t-il un droit acquis, opposable au Gouvernement ottoman, à exécuter des recherches de gisements pétrolifères dans le vilayet de Bagdad ?

2. Dans le cas de l'affirmative, le fait par le Sultan Abdul Hamid d'avoir, postérieurement à l'octroi du permis de recherches et antérieurement à l'expiration du délai d'exécution des recherches, décrété l'octroi du domaine minier du vilayet de Bagdad à la cassette privée, peut-il avoir pour conséquence légale de rendre caduc les droits acquis de Tahsin Pacha ?

Sur le premier point—

Le soussigné ne peut que constater qu'il n'a pas à entrer dans le fond de la question, ni examiner la valeur juridique intrinsèque du permis de recherches général et imprécis accordé à Tahsin Pacha pour le vilayet de Bagdad. En effet, aux termes de l'article 90 de l'ancien Règlement minier du 25 août, 1887, aussi bien que de l'article 98 du Règlement minier actuel du 28 mars, 1906, tous différends relatifs à la possession de droits miniers doivent être tranchés administrativement, c'est-à-dire par l'autorité ottomane même, sur la base de délibérations du Conseil d'État—délibérations qui, en droit ottoman, ont d'autant plus de poids que la constitution ottomane revêt le Conseil d'État du droit d'interprétation législative. Or, il est exposé au soussigné que le Conseil d'État, à deux reprises, premièrement siégeant en section, deuxièmement siégeant en séance plénière, a conclu à l'existence d'un droit acquis en faveur de Tahsin Pacha en vertu du permis de recherches dont il est présentement question. Il apparaît, en conséquence, que, sur la base des décisions expresses et formelles du Conseil d'État exposées au soussigné, il y a lieu de considérer Tahsin Pacha comme muni en droit ottoman d'un droit acquis, opposable au Gouvernement ottoman, à la recherche de gisements pétrolifères dans le vilayet de Bagdad—droit devant demeurer opérant pendant un délai de quatre mois et seize jours à compter de la date de la signification à Tahsin Pacha de la décision définitive à intervenir.

Sur le deuxième point—

Le soussigné ne peut que se ranger à la décision du Conseil d'État siégeant en section, c'est-à-dire conclure à la non-opposabilité à Tahsin Pacha de l'iradé du Sultan Abdul Hamid octroyant à sa cassette privée le domaine minier du vilayet de Bagdad. Le soussigné ne connaît pas les motifs sur lesquels s'appuie la décision contraire du Conseil d'État siégeant en séance plénière ; il ne peut donc pas les critiquer ; mais il n'hésitera pas à déclarer qu'il ne parvient même pas à les concevoir. Car en donnant même, ce qui paraît inadmissible en l'espèce, la portée la plus haute et la plus grave, celle d'une loi d'Empire, à une expression de la volonté du Souverain adjugeant à sa cassette, à l'encontre de toutes les dispositions du Règlement minier, la concession d'un gisement minier quelconque, il est bien clair qu'en vertu d'un principe expressément énoncé dans la législation ottomane, cette loi présumée ne saurait avoir d'effet rétroactif, ni, par conséquent, porter une atteinte quelconque à des droits acquis. Or, il est exposé au soussigné que le Conseil d'État a reconnu que l'octroi du permis de recherches avait pour effet de créer un droit acquis au bénéfice de Tahsin Pacha. La seule conclusion qui puisse s'en déduire logiquement et sans contradiction est bien évidemment

que l'iradé du Sultan Abdul Hamid intervenant alors que le droit acquis de Tahsin Pacha devait conserver ce caractère de droit acquis pendant encore quatre mois et seize jours, ne pouvait exercer sur ce droit aucun effet dirimant, ni en modifier de quelque façon que ce fût la force et la durée.

Fait et délibéré à Constantinople, le 26 octobre, 1912.

LÉON OSTROROG.

[51845] No. 132.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Lowther.

(No. 1092.)
(Telegraphic.) R. *Foreign Office, December 6, 1912.*

PLEASE see Confidential Print, "Asiatic Turkey," September 28, Section 7, and my telegram No. 672 of 28th September.

Your Excellency should intimate to Turkish Government that His Majesty's Government hope concession for Mesopotamia oilfields will not be given to concessionnaires other than Mr. D'Arcy, who has spent much money for many years in maintaining an agent at Constantinople with a view to obtaining the concession which the attitude of the Turkish Government had led him to anticipate he would receive. His Majesty's Government attach great importance to this concession being granted to Mr. D'Arcy, especially in so far as the vilayets of Bagdad and Mosul are concerned.

[52330] No. 133.

Sir Edward Grey to Viscount Kitchener.

(No. 92.) R.
(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, December 7, 1912.*

THERE are persistent statements in French press that, through naval officers, your private secretary and consulate at Beirout, we are intriguing in Syria to get the country. I have told French Government it is untrue, and that we have no intentions or aspirations there.

It would be well, if you find the report current in Egypt, to let it be known that it is untrue.

[51845] No. 134.

Foreign Office to Anglo-Persian Oil Company.

(Confidential.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, December 7, 1912.*

I AM directed by Secretary Sir Edward Grey to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 4th instant on the subject of Mr. d'Arcy's interest in the Mesopotamian oilfields.

I am to inform you that Sir Edward Grey is in telegraphic communication with His Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople in regard to this question.

I am, &c.
LOUIS MALLET.

[52354] No. 135.

Viscount Kitchener to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 8.)

(No. 85.)
(Telegraphic.) R. *Cairo, December 8, 1912.*

YOUR telegram No. 92 of 7th December.

Of course rumours are without any foundation ; they are based on the fact that large sections of the people of Syria, both Mahommedan and Christian, would prefer British to French administration, and consider future prosperity of their country depends largely on close connection with Egypt. Some time ago local papers here reported that deputation of Syrian Mahommedans and Christians intended to pay me a

visit. I let it be known that I would not receive them, and have heard nothing more on the subject. There are no rumours here of intrigues on our part in Syria; on the contrary, our attitude of aloofness has been subjected to comment. Above views of Syrian inhabitants have, however, been discussed.

[52370] No. 136.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 9.)

(No. 1036. Confidential.)

Sir, *Constantinople, December 4, 1912.*

I HAVE the honour to enclose two despatches, Nos. 73 and 74, Confidential, of the 18th and 25th November, from Mr. Fontana, His Majesty's consul at Aleppo, reporting on the state of effervescence and disorder in the Zeitun region of the Aleppo vilayet.

In view of the past history of Zeitun, and especially the incidents there at the time of the Armenian massacres in 1896, it is perhaps not surprising that recent events in Turkey in Europe and the capital should have a special echo in the northern portions of the province of Aleppo. Though the Armenians have behaved well and fought well during the Balkan war, they, in common with the Arabs and Kurds, have been prospecting as to their possible fate in the eventuality of further disruption of the Turkish State, and a noticeable feature is that, though in the past and even after the big massacres in 1896 they preferred Turkish to Russian rule, the massacres at Adana in 1909, and the continual menace of the repetition of such a calamity have gradually brought them round to regarding a Russian occupation as less unbearable than their present existance.

An Armenian who has had special occasion to interest himself in the Hajin and Zeitun districts recently told a member of this embassy that Armenians there had recently received hints from German sources to the effect that in the event of a further break-up of Turkey Germany would be disposed to specially interest herself in Cilicia, *i.e.*, the region in and around the Gulf of Alexandretta. The Armenian in question remarked that the "Germans were ticks," and that as their Emperor had immediately after the big Armenian massacres proclaimed himself the friend of Abdul Hamid and the protector of Islam, the Armenian people could never have confidence in the Germans, and would much prefer the Russians, who allowed the Armenian population in the Caucasus to increase and prosper. Even the Armenian Tashnack revolutionaries, who are anti-clerical and republican in doctrine, and consequently bitterly anti-Russian, have recently shown signs of modifying their attitude in this respect.

I have had the Minister of the Interior's attention drawn to the facts narrated in Mr. Fontana's despatches. Reshid Bey, who, as Vali of Aleppo acquired a first-hand knowledge of the regions in question, states that he is trying to arrange the matter of the deserters in concert with the Armenian Patriarch.

I have, &c.

GERARD LOWTHER.

Enclosure 1 in No. 136.

Consul Fontana to Sir G. Lowther.

(No. 73. Confidential.)

Sir, *Aleppo, November 18, 1912.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 67 of the 26th ultimo, I have the honour to report upon the present state of things in this vilayet.

I have received further letters from an Englishman at Ourfa speaking very highly of the mutessarif, Ismail Pasha, concerning whom I wrote in my despatch No. 67. Ismail Pasha recently called together sixteen Moslem and ten Christian notables, and addressed them cordially as fellow-citizens, urging them to work together for the common good at this time of national peril, and he exhorted the khojas among the Moslems to take care that the Christians were treated with kindness and respect. The meeting was a great success, and the Christians in general in that district seem to have been reassured and cheered accordingly. I mentioned the matter to my French colleague, who informed me that he also had

received excellent reports from the Catholic orders at Ourfa regarding the mutessarif. And we agreed that, should the present vali be recalled or transferred, the nomination of Ismail Pasha as Governor-General of Aleppo would be most desirable and greatly to the interest of the native Christians at this momentous time. And I understand that both M. Laporte and the Russian consul have suggested to their respective embassies the desirability of Ismail Pasha's nomination to Aleppo, which suggestion, as emanating primarily from myself, I would beg to submit to the consideration of your Excellency. The present vali, Vefik Bey, does not seem to possess the mental or physical stamina to cope with any emergency calling for much energy and determination. And such an emergency may present itself before long. It is whispered that the Committee of Union and Progress intend fomenting anti-Christian disturbances to avert the public attention from themselves at the close of this disastrous war. And, on the other hand, it is rumoured that the Armenians will take advantage of Ottoman reverses to create trouble and draw attention to themselves. The state of things in this region has been latterly extremely quiet, almost ominously so, and a reversion of feeling, easily and swiftly produced, may change the present apathy and despondency of the Moslems into fanatical excitement, and the assurance and tranquillity of the local Christians into unreasoning panic. To-day I heard that certain Germans have expressed their intention to betake themselves to the Armenian quarter for protection in case of anti-Christian disturbances. That quarter, consisting in stone houses and narrow alleys rather than streets, might easily be held by relatively few against many. But there the Germans would probably find themselves in the very thick of the fray. Their presence, however, might further any secret designs which the Armenians may now possibly be entertaining.

The news regarding Zeitun is not reassuring. An extra battalion of troops has been sent to Elbistan, the Zeitun garrison has been reinforced, and troops and mountain guns have been dispatched to Marash. Some thirty or forty soldiers have also been sent to each of the two Armenian villages of Fernouz and Gheben (near Zeitun), where troops had not previously been quartered. The Zeitun barracks are situated outside of the town. Some thirty troopers from there were some days ago told off to arrest four Armenian deserters from the army. The troops entered the town and surrounded but did not dare to arrest the deserters, who sat and smoked their cigarettes taking no notice of the soldiers. The soldiers withdrew, and the kaimakam informed the Armenian agas that unless they delivered up the deserters he would proclaim martial law. A day or two later one of the four deserters was shot by a soldier whilst passing before the barracks. Another Armenian, a native of Gheben, was murdered in cold blood by Moslems. According to letters received from the American mission at Marash by my American colleague, and from the French vice-consul there by M. Laporte, a large number of Moslem deserters from the army have taken refuge in the Zeitun district, where they are daily committing acts of brigandage on the mountain roads, and robbery in both Christian and Moslem villages. These acts, however, are represented by the authorities as committed by Armenians, although the Armenian deserters are relatively few, and the town and people of Zeitun are absolutely quiet. The Armenian Patriarch has telegraphed to the muraklas of Aleppo that the Minister of the Interior has received information that Armenian individuals and bands are robbing and pillaging in the Zeitun district. Thus the crimes of the armed Moslem deserters are imputed to the Armenians, and a pretext is found for the dispatch of troops to the Zeitun region.

And it is to be feared that the reinforcement of troops at and around Zeitun, following upon the ungrounded charges of brigandage brought against the Armenians by the Zeitun and Marash authorities, may indicate a design to utilise the present moment when the attention of the European Powers is occupied by the war in European Turkey, to provoke an outburst and create a pretext to utterly wipe out the Zeitun Armenians and demolish Zeitun. Such a climax has been hoped for for long past by the Moslems, if not by the authorities of Marash and Elbistan. Friendly representations to the vali with regard to the dispatch of troops to the Zeitun district have been made, at the request of the Armenian bishop, by the French consul, supported by our Russian colleague and myself. The vali, however, gave assurances that the dispatch of troops to the Zeitun neighbourhood was merely a measure taken to ensure public tranquillity there, and that small bodies of troops were being sent to other districts with a similar object.

Yesterday the French and Russian consuls, followed by the Armenian bishop, called upon me, and after discussing the situation at Zeitun, regarding which the bishop seems to feel deep anxiety, a telegram (of which the copy is enclosed) was drawn up

jointly for dispatch by the Russian consul to his embassy. M. de Zimmermann undertook to request that copies of that telegram might be communicated to the British and French Embassies, and to the Armenian Patriarch, and M. Laporte informed the bishop that he would instruct his vice-consul at Marash by telegraph to proceed, if possible, to Zeitun and acquaint himself thoroughly with what was going on in that town and neighbourhood. The bishop, who is from the Zeitun kaza and knows the country well, has drawn up a map (upon which the enclosed sketch is based) of the Marash-Zeitun-Elbistan region, which he has handed to me. The relative position therein, however, of the important Armenian villages of Fernouz and Gheben, where troops are now quartered for the first time, are, according to Keepert's map, reversed. The sketch, nevertheless, may be of use for reference, as it indicates the approximate number of the Christian and Moslem population of the more important towns and villages, and their distance from Zeitun.

In this connection I would emphasise the fact that, although the authorities appear to attach much importance to the delivery into their hands of a few Armenian deserters from the army at Zeitun, they appear to ignore that of the existence of many Moslem deserters both in the Zeitun kaza and elsewhere in the vilayet. The Armenian mutrakhas urged, before the outbreak of war, that a general pardon might be granted to deserters returning to their regiments with their rifles, but his suggestion was not approved of.

The progress of the war between the Balkan States and Turkey has had a depressing, but salutory, effect among the upper-class Turks, whose former overweaning confidence in the military power of Turkey has received a rude shock. Feelings of bitter resentment are expressed for Germany and the Germans, and, as seems usual in times of misfortune, England is looked to as the only reliable friend. Such, however, does not seem to be the case when things are going smoothly. There seems to be a general desire, both among the Christians and the majority of the Arabs, that England should take over and govern the country. Among many of the Arab notables and tribal sheikhs the Turkish defeats have caused real rejoicing, in spite of the fact that those defeats have been inflicted by Christian States. The most important sheikh of the Jerablus neighbourhood—Sheikh Busrawi—recently informed an Englishman there with whom he is well acquainted, that he was delighted at the reverses of the Turks and was only awaiting the signal from the sons of the late Ibrahim Pasha to join them with 5,000 men and march upon Aleppo. Meanwhile, the sons of Ibrahim Pasha have gone up to the Van district with the avowed object of fighting, partly, it seems, at the secret request of the Government and partly on their own account. They are rebuilding Weiransheher, and seem to retain their father's influence and more than their father's ambition. Sheikh Busrawi has informed his followers and the people of his countryside who have received with joy the news of the Turkish defeats, and are hoping for the downfall of the Central Government, that England holds the future of this country, and that she will eventually take it over. He told the Englishman, however, that the Khedive, the Shereef of Mecca, and the Sheikh El Senoussi, have agreed together to found an Arab Empire under an Arab Sultan, and that the Arabs and Kurds are to form a military alliance against the Turks. Sheikh Busrawi is a Kurdish chief of great importance, and it is he who, as reported in my despatch No. 67, nefariously obtained money and rifles from the military authorities by feigning to furnish volunteers for the present war.

Letters received here from Mardin report widespread brigandage in Upper Mesopotamia, robbery of travellers, caravans, and camels being of daily occurrence.

I have, &c.

R. A. FONTANA.

P.S. *November* 19.—I have to-day received communication from my French colleague of a letter just received by him from the French vice-consul at Marash, extracts from which, with his permission, I have the honour herewith to enclose. The state of things in the Zeitun region, as therein depicted, does not entirely coincide with my description in this despatch, but his information should be more reliable as derived in the vicinity of Zeitun itself. It is only just to add, however, that the writer inclines to depreciation of the Armenians and of their bishop, and that it would therefore be safer to strike a line, as regards the responsibility of Armenian marauders in the Zeitun kaza, midway between the information furnished by him and that received by me and submitted in this despatch.

On the receipt of the letter in question the French consul, my Russian colleague,

and I thought well that the projected telegram before alluded to, a copy of which is enclosed, should be withheld.

R. A. F.

Enclosure 2 in No. 136.

Projected Telegram to Russian Embassy.

BRUITS de nombreux vols et assassinats perpétrés pas les musulmans et attribués par ceux-ci aux Arméniens dans la région de Zeitoun.

Les autorités prétextant, entre autres motifs, la question de déserteurs arméniens, envoient des renforts de troupes et menacent de l'état de siège si les Arméniens ne livrent pas leurs coreligionnaires déserteurs.

Nous donnons cette information afin de prévenir, si possible, toute complication.

[For Enclosure 3, see Map.]

Enclosure 4 in No. 136.

French Vice-Consul Habib Eddé to M. Laporte.

(Extrait.) *Marache, le 11 novembre*, 1912.

LE sandjak de Marache se trouve, aujourd'hui, parcouru dans tous les sens par les brigands. Leurs exploits arrivent jusqu'aux portes de la ville. Les uns sont originaires de notre arrondissement, d'autres nous viennent d'Aintab, de Killis, d'Osmanié, d'Islahié, de Hadjino et de plusieurs contrées, voire même des frontières persanes. Une bande de Kurdes qui rôdaient dans les vilayets de Malatia, Mamourat-el-Aziz, Siwas, dans le mutessariflik de Césarée, se voyant poursuivis par les troupes, se jetèrent sur les districts de Hadjino, d'Albistan et de Kiksun. On n'ose plus s'aventurer seul hors de la ville, des assassinats et des vols à Andrine, Gueben, par-ci par-là . . . Le mutessariflik ne disposait que d'un nombre insuffisant de gendarmes. Il vient d'en recevoir une quarantaine.

La garnison de l'armée régulière, comprenant le 77e régiment d'infanterie, était, à la suite des mouvements occasionnés par la dernière mobilisation des troupes, dispersée ainsi qu'il suit :—

Du 1er bataillon, les 1re et 2e compagnies, s'élevant à un effectif de 250 soldats environ, se trouvent casernées à Marache. La 3e compagnie, formée de 117 hommes, existe à Zeitoun.

Le 2e bataillon est à Alep et le 3e à Beyrouth.

Un bataillon de rédifs de la circonscription de Zeitoun est concentré à Marache. De ce bataillon, la 2e compagnie, d'environ 147 hommes, a été expédiée, ces jours derniers, à Zeitoun.

Le bataillon de rédifs d'Albistan reste sur place, attendu que les habitants de cette localité ont eu recours à leurs manœuvres habituelles, en agissant à Constantinople, à Adana et à Alep, pour faire arrêter son départ, sous prétexte qu'ils redoutent les Zeitoundus et, cette fois encore, les Albistanistes y ont réussi.

A l'heure actuelle, il y a donc :—

A Marache :

Deux cent cinquante soldats nizams et ihtyates formant l'effectif des 1re et 2e compagnies du 1er bataillon du 77e régiment d'infanterie.

Trois cent quatre-vingts rédifs (1re, 3e et 4e compagnies du bataillon de Zeitoun). Plus un canon (pièce de montagne dépourvue de valeur), déposé dans l'ancienne forteresse de Marache.

A Zeitoun :

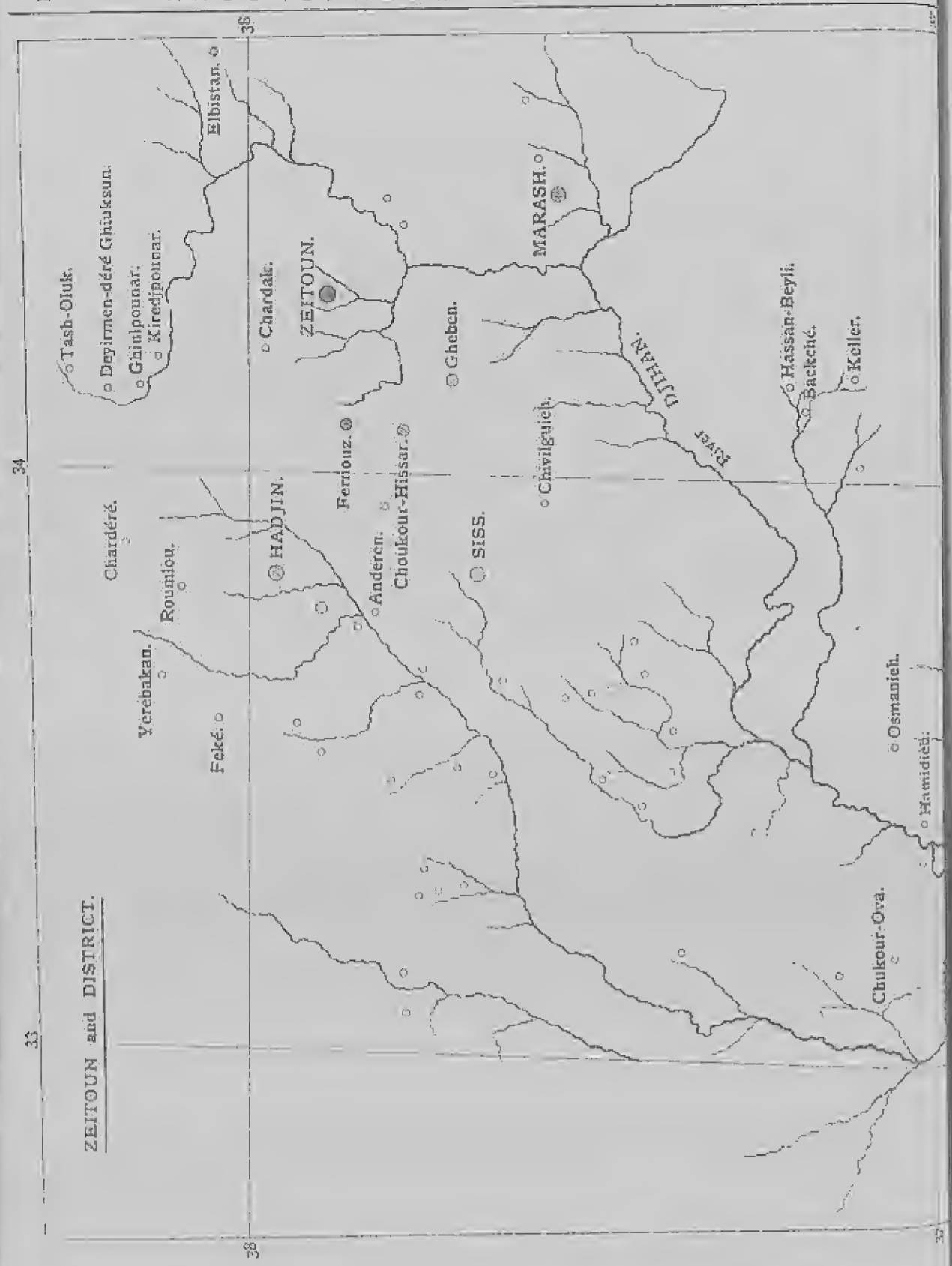
Cent dix-sept soldats nizams et ihtyates (3e compagnie du 1er bataillon d'infanterie).

Cent quarante-sept rédifs (2e compagnie du bataillon de Zeitoun), plus treize artilleurs et deux gros canons à tir rapide, déposés à la caserne de Zeitoun.

Enclosure 3 in Consul Fontanas' No. 73 of November 18, 1912.

	Population.	Distance from Zeitoun (hours).
ZEITOUN .	25,000 A	—
FERNOUZ .	8,000 A	6
GHEBEN .	6,000 A	14
CHUKUR-HISSAR	500 T	10
ANDIRIN .	300 T	15
GHIUKSUN .	5,000 M	10
YARPOUZ .	700 M	12
ELBISTAN .	2,000 M	15
HADJIN .	35,000 M	18
MARASH .	40,000 M	10
SISS . .	15,000 M	30

A denotes Armenian Population.
T denotes Turkish Population.
M denotes Mixed Armenian and Turkish Population.



A Albistan :

Huit cents rédifs formant le bataillon de la circonscription d'Albistan.

Les autorités civiles et militaires réclament aujourd'hui leurs deux bataillons se trouvant à Beyrouth et à Alep et appartenant au 77e régiment d'infanterie. Celui dont vous m'annoncez télégraphiquement l'envoi d'Alep en est du nombre. Sous peu il sera ici avec une cinquantaine de charges d'armes et de munitions et un canon-mortier. A l'arrivée de ces deux bataillons, on licenciera probablement les rédifs et l'on distribuera les troupes régulières de l'armée active de la manière suivante :—

Un bataillon sera établi à Zeitoun avec mission de poursuivre les déserteurs et les brigands de cette contrée.

Deux bataillons seront logés dans les casernes de Marache. De ces deux bataillons un nombre suffisant de soldats seront expédiés à Andrine, Gueben, Yannijakaleaa, Kuksun, pour surveiller la sécurité des régions que le brigandage désole depuis quelque temps. . . . .

De leur côté, les brigands de Zeitoun continuent leurs agressions sous la direction de leur chef, Nazareth Chaouïche. Ils attaquent et dévalisent les passants et les caravanes ; ils menacent les soldats, les gendarmes et les fonctionnaires. Depuis peu, l'un de ces brigands a menacé de son Mauser le mufti et le caïmakan, qui, de concert avec le commandant militaire, ont demandé des troupes de renfort afin de pouvoir agir sérieusement contre les malfaiteurs et maintenir l'ordre dans la contrée. Cette demande a été approuvée en soutenue par les autorités civiles et militaires de Marache et d'Alep. Aux bruits de cette demande de troupes, Nazareth Chaouïche, avait essayé, indirectement, une tentative auprès de moi, à l'effet de faire échouer par les intimidations cette action contre les siens, mais quand il a senti que sa démarche ne pouvait rencontrer aucune chance de succès, il a eu recours à Constantinople, à Sis, à Alep et ailleurs, au moyen des comités "Tachnaksoutioun," de ses amis et connaissances. Au lieu de se tenir tranquille et de suivre les sages conseils que les chefs spirituels, les principaux notables, les personnages sérieux et amis de la nation arménienne lui donnent, Nazareth Chaouïche croit saisir dans son intérêt propre le moment favorable d'encourager le brigandage. A Alep il est protégé par Mgr. Tanielian et Compagnie, qui le défendent avec chaleur, et font manœuvrer, en sa faveur, auprès des hautes personnalités, certains individus d'esprit turbulent, capables de compromettre la situation. C'est la sagesse et la prudence qui leur manquent. Il nous faudrait surveiller leurs machinations, les nouvelles qui leur sont données de Marache et de Zeitoun et diriger tous nos efforts vers la tranquillité. En un mot, tant que le chef de brigands, Nazareth Chaouïche, et le Mourakhas Karamfilian—sérieusement malade, me dit-on—sont en vie et à Zeitoun, il n'y aurait pas de repos dans la contrée.

Le mutessarif et le commandant des troupes m'ont, du reste, affirmé que le Gouvernement n'a nullement l'intention de punir les pauvres innocents pour les coupable. D'ailleurs, la présence à la tête du vilayet d'un homme tel que Vélik Boy, dont j'ai eu le bonheur de faire la connaissance à Sivas, constitue une sérieuse garantie de sûreté.

Enclosure 5 in No. 136.

Consul Fontana to Sir G. Lowther.

(No. 74. Confidential.)

Aleppo, November 25, 1912.

Sir,

IN continuation of the last despatch which I had the honour to address to your Excellency, I have since learnt from the Russian consul that the telegram alluded to (and a copy of which was enclosed) therein as not sent, was, in fact, dispatched a day or two later. M. de Zimmerman explained this to me afterwards, although he had previously agreed with me that it was not desirable to send that telegram as it was, without some modification.

I beg herewith to enclose the copy of a letter addressed to the Russian and United States consuls, and to myself, by M. Laporte, communicating further information received by him from the French vice-consul at Marash regarding Zeitun. From this letter it appears that the Armenians of Zeitun would be willing to lend their clandestine aid to the authorities in arresting the deserters, who are robbing on the roads, were it not for the fear of denunciation followed by retribution at the

hands, perhaps, of a secret society. And he suggests that the better way to ensure the surrender of the deserters would be to grant a general amnesty. M. Laporte also states that his vice-consul at Marash has undertaken to assist the Protestant missionaries in his district, in case of need, with his good offices. I have duly thanked M. Laporte for this letter, and have offered to support any suggestion he may find it possible to make to the Governor-General, with regard to the amnesty, which would tend to improve the situation in the Zeitun district.

It is to be regretted that the force of gendarmes available in this vilayet is totally inadequate for present needs.

In connection with the paragraph in my last despatch dealing with the situation at Jarablus, I have the honour to quote the following extract from a letter to-day received from my correspondent there :—

"Busrawi tells me that the Kurds and Arabs have definitely done with the Osmanlis, and mean to have a Sultan of their own, and he expects perhaps three years of fighting in North Syria to establish this end. . . . . Derai was moving with 900 men viâ Birejik to Aleppo ; the son of Ibrahim Pasha has turned back from his march towards Bitlis, and with 1,600 men is proceeding towards Aleppo ; the rest will probably move soon. I cannot quite make out their plans ; they profess that they are going to assist the Government against the allies, but this is, I am sure, a pretext. Among themselves they say they are now going to Aleppo 'for food,' and this may be the case. They have a great dread of the winter, since the hard frosts of two years ago, and quite possibly they mean to live for four months at Government expense, while keeping on the spot for hostilities. That they will advance north I do not for a moment believe. They talk freely of plundering Aleppo when the moment comes, and of sacking the railway line. They are most anxious to have the good-will of England for an Arab Sultanate, and will not hurt the English (at least if they keep in hand), and I strongly urged them to respect Germans and all foreigners and Christians."

I am hardly inclined to think that any advance of these Kurds upon Aleppo will, even if accomplished, prove a very serious matter unless events lead to a state of military disruption and Governmental paralysis sufficiently acute to offer them easy booty without much danger to their own persons.

I should conjecture that they would wait, like vultures, until dissolution was very near indeed.

I have, &c.

R. A. FONTANA.

Enclosure 6 in No. 136.

M. Laporte to Consul Fontana.

Alep, le 23 novembre, 1912.

J'AI reçu avant-hier un télégramme du vice-consul de France à Marache.

Il confirme dans ce sens la nouvelle que nous a donnée Mgr. Nersès.

Un déserteur-brigand, ayant opposé de la résistance à douze soldats lancés à sa poursuite du côté de la caserne de Zeitoun, fut fusillé par la troupe venue à l'aide. Il semblerait qu'on ait gaspillé les coups de fusil contre un seul homme. La population n'aurait fait aucune manifestation pour cet événement et se trouverait "presque" tranquille.

M. Eddé ne voit donc pas la nécessité, pour le moment, de se rendre à Zeitoun. D'après mes renseignements, une panique s'étant manifestée récemment dans le caza de Marache, il doit être difficile à notre agent consulaire de se déplacer sans autorisation spéciale de l'Ambassade.

J'ai obtenu par ailleurs des informations de notables arméniens de la région. Les Zeitounlus sont les premiers intéressés à la capture de la bande de déserteurs qui commet des actes de brigandage et entretient l'insécurité des routes. Ils aideraient clandestinement les autorités à s'en emparer, mais ne peuvent les dénoncer ouvertement sous peine de vengeance meurtrière. Ils se trouvent ainsi paralysés, et ce serait aux forces de police à accomplir d'elles-mêmes leur devoir. Ce qui revient à dire que les gens de Zeitoun ne pourraient et ne devraient être rendus responsables des actes de la bande. Le meilleur moyen d'en venir à bout consisterait à accorder une amnistie ; dans ces conditions le clergé et la nation arménienne se feraient fort de faire rentrer dans l'ordre les insoumis. J'ai cru devoir répondre à cet argument qu'il était difficile d'obliger

les autorités ottomanes à ne pas appliquer la loi aux coupables. Mais peut-être pourrons-nous insister au vilayet sur les conséquences heureuses d'une pareille mesure de clémence.

M. Eddé s'est encore engagé à rendre aux missionnaires protestants tous les services qu'ils lui demanderaient à titre officieux.

[52488] No. 137.

Sir R. Rodd to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 9.)

(No. 380.)

Sir, *Rome, December 5, 1912.*

I HAVE the honour to report that in the debate in the Italian Chamber of Deputies on the Treaty of Lausanne the Prime Minister yesterday took the opportunity offered by the questions put to him in other speeches to refer to the Italian occupation of the Ægean islands. The substance of his remarks, as reported in the press—no other report being yet available—was as follows:—

The peace of Lausanne was concluded before war broke out between Greece and Turkey. Greece was aware of the obligations which Italy had undertaken towards Turkey. We could make no other engagements. We could not claim to take possession of lands of Greek nationality. That would have implied the sanction of a genuine irredentism and would have been contrary to the sentiment of nationality. We could not therefore do otherwise than contract for their restoration, demanding guarantees on behalf of the inhabitants, which are secured by the Sultan's decree. We further stipulated that we should not withdraw from the islands until after the Turks had completely evacuated Libya.

This is the precise situation, of which Greece was well aware at the moment of declaring war on Turkey.

But Signor Bissolati has addressed two questions to me, to which it is my duty to give clear answers.

If we withdraw from the islands before peace is concluded between Greece and Turkey, are we under the obligation of preventing the Greeks from occupying them? I answer emphatically, No. This was not anticipated, and could not be anticipated, by a treaty negotiated before war between Turkey and Greece broke out.

If our withdrawal from the islands takes place after the conclusion of peace between Greece and Turkey, what will happen then?

I have no means of knowing whether or how the question of the islands will be approached or settled in a treaty of peace between Greece and Turkey. If it be resolved between Greece and Turkey, we shall have nothing to say in the matter. But if the status of the islands is to be submitted to the appreciation of Europe, and decided in a congress in which Italy will take part as one of the Great Powers, she will be able to make her voice heard in perfect freedom.

I have sent a brief summary of Signor Giolitti's observations by telegraph.

I have, &c.
RENNELL RODD.

[52935] No. 138.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received December 11.)

Sir, *India Office, December 10, 1912.*

WITH reference to previous correspondence, ending with letter of the 22nd June from the Foreign Office, regarding the relief of the Bagdad consular guard, I am directed by the Secretary of State for India to forward herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, a copy of a secret letter from the Government of India on the subject, and to say that the Marquess of Crewe is disposed to concur in the opinions expressed therein.

I am, &c.
T. W. HOLDERNESS.

Enclosure in No. 138.

Government of India to the Marquess of Crewe.

(Secret.)

My Lord Marquess, *Simla, November 14, 1912.*

IN reply to your Lordship's secret despatch, dated the 22nd March, 1912, we have the honour to express regret for the mistake which resulted in the dispatch of twenty-one cases of surplus ammunition to Bagdad without reference to the resident. The necessary instructions have now been issued to the military authorities with a view to preventing the recurrence of similar mistakes in future.

2. With reference to the suitability of employing Hindu instead of Mohammedan troops for the purpose of the guard at this consulate, on which your Lordship invites an expression of our opinion, we would explain that this guard is furnished by the regiment which is detailed annually to provide the detachments required for duty in the Persian Gulf.

The regiment selected for this purpose has hitherto happened to contain a proportion of Mohammedans, but it is difficult, having regard to other considerations, to ensure that such a condition is always fulfilled, and last year the 7th Duke of Connaught's Own Rajputs, a wholly Hindu regiment, was selected for this duty.

The political resident in Turkish Arabia reports that the innovation of a Hindu guard at Bagdad has so far resulted in no untoward circumstances, and, though he feels that it is too early at present to pronounce with confidence on the merits or demerits of the change, he considers that the arrangement is not without advantages, as there is an absence of social contact between the guard and the inhabitants of the town from which quarrels and difficulties are liable to arise. The men, he says, have the finest appearance of any guard that has been stationed in Bagdad in recent years, and their advent, in his opinion, will give the Turks and Arabs an opportunity of realising that the Indian army does not consist entirely of Mohammedans.

It is proposed to relieve the present guard by another Hindu detachment in the autumn, and we are of opinion that there is no necessity to alter this arrangement unless and until the resident reports that the presence of Hindu troops in Bagdad is undesirable.

We have, &c.
GUY FLEETWOOD WILSON.
SEYYID ALI IMAM.
R. H. CRADDOCK.

[53071] No. 139.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received December 12.)

THE Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and forwards herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, copy of a telegram from the Viceroy, dated the 11th December, 1912, regarding the Sheikh of Dubai.

India Office, December 12, 1912.

Enclosure in No. 139.

Government of India to Marquess of Crewe.

(Telegraphic.) P. *December 11, 1912.*

TELEGRAM dated the 5th December, received from resident, Persian Gulf, to Government of India to following effect:—

"It is reported by telegram by the senior naval officer, who visited Dubai as requested, that on or about the 29th of November the sheikh succumbed to paralytic stroke. He had been ailing. There is no son left eligible to succeed, and consequently there will possibly be two or three rival claimants. In my letter of the 30th April 1911, (forwarded as enclosure to weekly letter of the 18th May 1911 from Secretary, Foreign Department) paragraphs 11 and 12, I made a proposal, partly prompted by of

the late sheikh's unsatisfactory character. It is hoped that in course of time Zora will attract as a centre; but we already have to hand a large and prosperous town, in Debai, and naturally to instal the telegraph office there instead of at Zora (where its installation would be more expensive) would bring more direct and more immediate benefits to our merchants. I think that opportunity is afforded by sheikh's death to negotiate with successor, by refusing to recognise any successor unless he agrees to welcome telegraph office and telegraph officials and gives all assistance required to acquire quarters and erect engine room. The candidates for succession could be so negotiated with over the question as to leave us opening to fall back with full prestige on Zora as alternative, if eventually there appears to be undue risk or difficulty in the way of setting up the telegraph at Debai. Please inform me of your views as early as possible."

I have given Cox permission to negotiate on lines indicated with the sheikh's successor; but before entering on definite arrangement a further report will be furnished by him.

[51952] No. 140.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Lowther.

(No. 565.)

Sir, *Foreign Office, December* 13, 1912.

WITH reference to your Excellency's despatch No. 859 of the 13th October last, relative to the working of the deposits of mineral oil in Mesopotamia, I transmit to your Excellency herewith copy of a letter from Messrs. Murrieta and Company asking for the support of His Majesty's Government to expedite the issue by the Ottoman Minister of Mines and Forests of papers enabling a British syndicate to purchase the rights of Tahsin Pasha in connection with these deposits.*

Your Excellency will observe that the question of the validity of Tahsin Pasha's concession has been referred to Count Ostroróg whose opinion is favourable and I should be glad to learn whether you concur in his view.

I should also be glad to receive your Excellency's observations on Messrs. Murrieta's letter and on the request contained in it and to learn whether Tahsin Pasha is at present also in negotiation with Mr. D'Arcy's agent or the Standard Oil Company for the sale of his concession.

Your Excellency will doubtless perceive that the syndicate now in question is that which formed the subject of the correspondence ending with my despatch No. 155 of the 16th April last.

I am, &c.
E. GREY.

[50415] No. 141.

Foreign Office to India Office.

Sir, *Foreign Office, December* 13, 1912.

I AM directed by Secretary Sir E. Grey to inform you that he has had under consideration the state of affairs in the Peninsula of El Katr, as described in the letter dated the 27th October from the political resident in the Persian Gulf to the Secretary to the Government of India in the Foreign Department.

It appears to Sir E. Grey that there are three courses open to His Majesty's Government:—

1. An attempt might be made to induce the Bin Thani family to agree to notify a prohibition of the import of arms by the offer of an increased subsidy or by threats of making our displeasure felt if they refuse.

2. A close naval blockade of the El Katr coast might be established.

3. An intimation might be made to the Turkish Government that His Majesty's Government are compelled by circumstances to take action by landing men in El Katr, but that such action shall not be held to prejudice the Turkish claims such as they are.

Sir E. Grey would prefer the first course, and, if that is considered by Sir P. Cox unlikely to have the desired effect, he would then be disposed to fall back on the second.

* No. 131.

In regard to the third course, Sir E. Grey would prefer to adopt it only in the last resort, since it might provoke a retort from the Turkish Government that they are willing to suppress the arms traffic in El Katr, but that they are prevented from doing so owing to the reluctance of His Majesty's Government to allow the firm establishment of Turkish administration in that region.

Sir E. Grey is of course unwilling to disturb the *status quo* more than is absolutely necessary while negotiations for a general settlement are pending.

I am accordingly to suggest that the Government of India and Sir P. Cox should be consulted in regard to the first course.

I am, &c.
LOUIS MALLET.

[50411] No. 142.

Foreign Office to Sir H. Babington-Smith.

Sir, *Foreign Office, December* 13, 1912.

I AM directed by Secretary Sir Edward Grey to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 21st October last, relative to matters connected with the navigation of the Tigris and Euphrates.

I am to inform you in reply that Sir E. Grey has carefully considered your communication, but that His Majesty's Government, as at present advised, would not be disposed to look with favour on any hypothetical combination which would appear to eliminate the element of competition with the proposed railway or affect the British character of the existing navigation company.

I am, &c.
LOUIS MALLET.

[53355] No. 143.

Lieutenant-Colonel Sir P. Cox to Sir Edward Grey.—(*Received December* 14.)

(No. 8. Confidential.)

Sir, *Bushire, November* 24, 1912.

I HAVE the honour to enclose a copy of a despatch, with enclosure, which I have addressed to His Majesty's Minister on the subject of the buoying and lighting of Bushire harbour, together with a copy of the enclosure to my despatch No. 69, dated the 13th October, to which reference is made.

I am forwarding a copy of the enclosures to this despatch to His Majesty's India Office.

I have, &c.
P. Z. COX, *Lieutenant-Colonel, British Resident in the Persian Gulf, and His Majesty's Consul-General for Fars, &c.*

Enclosure 1 in No. 143.

Lieutenant-Colonel Sir P. Cox to Sir W. Townley.

(No. 84.)

Sir, *Bushire, November* 24, 1912.

IN continuation of my despatch No. 69, dated the 13th October, 1912, I have the honour to state, for your Excellency's information, that two acetylene gas buoys for the Bushire anchorage have recently arrived, and, after trial at Abadan, will shortly be laid.

2. In case this should evoke any enquiry or protest by the Persian Government, I beg to enclose herewith a copy of a memorandum which has been prepared from the archives of this residency, from a perusal of which it will be seen that our prescriptive claim to control the lighting and buoying of the Gulf, which was put forward by His Majesty's Government in the course of negotiations with Turkey,* is, at any rate in the

* *Vide* British notes to Turkish Ambassador, dated July 29, 1911, and July 18, 1912.

particular case of the Bushire roadstead, amply justified by the facts. The record further demonstrates, I venture to think, the perilous futility of the spasmodic attempts to buoy or light the harbour made in the past by the Persian Government, whether through their own local authorities or through the medium of the Belgian Customs, and affords us excellent practical grounds for insisting on our right to continue to control the buoyage of this harbour, on the efficiency of which the safety of shipping, almost entirely British, in a great measure depends.

I may mention that a new unlighted buoy was laid in Bunder Abbas harbour in March last without any protest being raised.

I have sent a copy of this despatch, with enclosures, to the Government of India and to His Majesty's Foreign Office.

I have, &c.

P. Z. COX, *Lieutenant-Colonel, British Resident in the Persian Gulf, and His Majesty's Consul-General for Fars, &c.*

Enclosure 2 in No. 143.

Note on Arrangements made for the Buoying and Lighting of Bushire Harbour since 1863.

WRITING in June 1863, Lieutenant-Colonel Pelly writes to the officer commanding residency schooner "Georgiana" instructing him to obtain from Marghil (Bussorah) a buoy to replace the Bushire buoy, as one is required for the spit at the entrance of Bushire harbour (*i.e.*, inner anchorage). The buoy in question was found too small, and a buoy was therefore obtained by the "Georgiana" from the village of Gusbah, whose inhabitants had picked it up some four years before.

Writing on the 23rd July, 1863, to the Chief Secretary to the Government of Bombay, Lieutenant-Colonel Pelly explains that he took the above action in anticipation of orders of Government, as the existing buoy had sunk, and to have delayed action pending reference to Government would have been to risk another grounding of the mail-steamer.

The superintendent of marine, Bombay, reported to Government in August of the same year that the above orders by Lieutenant-Colonel Pelly anticipated directions sent by him to the commander of the "Georgiana" to replace the buoys and beacons at Bushire and the Shatt-el-Arab.

It appears clear that there were normally two buoys in the anchorage, as Lieutenant-Colonel Pelly, in November 1863, in a letter to the Chief Secretary to the Government of Bombay, remarks that if a new buoy is sent up for the Shatt-el-Arab the buoy at present there "could then be laid down at the entrance of the Bushire roads. At present there is a buoy only on one side of the fairway into those roads."

In 1865 one of these buoys drifted out of position, and was relaid by the residency schooner in its proper place on the 9th April, 1866.

In 1870 one of these buoys was carried away "from the outer roads"; the Government of Bombay sent up a buoy to replace it.

In 1873 it was reported that "the Government buoys marking the entrance to the port" were in need of repairs, which were shortly afterwards effected by His Majesty's ships.

In 1873 one Abdul Aziz-bin-Jasim, who describes himself as a Government pilot, writes to Colonel Ross stating that he was constructing minaret for the purpose of a lighthouse for the convenience of ships, and asking for a lantern and a supply of oil for use thereon, but it does not appear from the record what action, if any, was taken thereon, though the proposal was referred to the shipping companies and to the commander of one of His Majesty's ships for an expression of their views.

In 1879 both the outer and inner buoys were found to be defective, but the Government of Bombay ruled that they were not to be replaced at the expense of Government, and the British India Steam Navigation Company also refused to be responsible for them.

In 1883 the Government of India in the Foreign Department wrote that it was not at present the intention of Government to replace the buoys in the Persian Gulf, but sanctioned the repair of the existing buoys at the expense of Government; a Marine Department resolution, dated the 25th July, 1883, confirmed the decision of Government not to provide new buoys.

In 1900 the local authorities were approached in the matter by Colonel Talbot, apparently for the first time, the governor being requested to co-operate in the relaying of a new buoy at the inner anchorage, which was eventually done on the 24th November, but by an officer of the "Lawrence." The governor was duly informed of what had been done, and promised to issue the necessary orders to fishermen, &c., not to interfere with the buoys.

In 1901 another buoy was laid by His Majesty's ship "Sphinx" on the west end of Lafkali reef, close to the spot which was occupied until recently by an iron beacon.

In March 1902 the "Lawrence" placed a buoy at the outer reef, and in informing the resident of the fact complained that two buoys previously laid in the same position had disappeared, and requested that orders on the subject might be issued by the local Persian authorities. The governor was accordingly verbally asked on the 2nd April to warn nakhodas and others not to interfere with the buoys, and promised verbally to do do so; he suggested, however, the expediency of our making the buoys distinctive so that they could be identified if stolen, and added that there were no Persian port authorities in Bushire who could look after such matters.

On the 13th January, 1903, R.I.M.S. "Lawrence" laid an iron buoy in the inner anchorage, but the Persian authorities do not appear to have specifically been informed.

In March 1904, as a result of pressure by the Russian Government, who proposed themselves to place buoys and erect lighthouses in the Persian Gulf, the Shah was induced to order from Russia a number of buoys to be laid at various points in the Persian Gulf. On the arrival of the buoys they were claimed by the Russian consul-general as the property of the Russian Government, but this claim was not admitted by the Customs, who made no use of the buoys for some time, as it was found that they were unsuitable for use in open water. Eventually, however, in September 1904 several of them were laid in the fairway channel of the harbour; within twelve months several of them had disappeared and were not replaced, and by 1905 it appears that none remained. A similar fate attended those laid on the bar of the Shatt-el-Arab by the Customs Department.

Enclosure 3 in No. 143.

Lieutenant-Colonel Sir P. Cox to Government of India.

(Confidential.) *Bushire, October 13, 1912.*

I HAVE the honour to recall that one of the items which, in a personal communication to you when in Calcutta, I included in a list of desiderata which, I considered, should be sought from the Persian Government by friendly means as opportunity offered was the general recognition of our prescriptive right to control buoyage and lighting in the Gulf.

2. On the one hand, it seems possible that a suitable opportunity for obtaining this recognition (which we have already sought from the Porte) may occur in the early future in connection with the grant of a fresh loan to Persia; on the other hand, there are some grounds to fear that if we are not soon in the field with a friendly demand in the direction referred to we may be baulked from making it by some pretentious communication from the Persian Government on the subject of lights or buoys in their waters.

3. I have specific reasons for this apprehension in that at a recent meeting with the Governor of the Gulf Ports (Mowakker-ed-Dowleh), his Excellency asked me the facts regarding the reported erection of a lighthouse at Tamb, and the location of lighted buoys at Bushire; he enquired at the same time what decision had eventually been arrived at in the case of the proposed lighthouse on Sheikh Shuaib. None of these topics had previously been touched upon between us.

As regards Tamb, I informed him that, with the concurrence of the Sheikh of Shargah, we were about to put up a light there to facilitate navigation. The only remark his Excellency had to make in this connection was to say that there was no doubt that the island properly belonged to Persia, and that they had to thank the blatant action of the Customs in 1904 for spoiling their case in regard thereto. I rejoined that we considered, on the other hand, that it was beyond doubt that the sheikh of the Dowasim of Oman owned the island, and as, in dealing with this question, we had to reckon with patent facts, it seemed waste of time for us to discuss the question now.

As regards the lighted buoys, I informed him that I understood that our marine authorities did intend to place gas buoys at the two anchorages, in order to improve the facilities for ships making the harbour. He then asked who was going to pay for their cost and upkeep. I replied that we should do so, as we were doing and always had done in the case of other buoys laid for the benefit of navigation in the Gulf.

As regards the proposed light for Sheikh Shuaib, I said that I had heard no more about it, and supposed the idea had been given up for the present at all events. He said, "What would such a lighthouse cost to erect—only about 2,000*l.*, I understand?" I replied, "Nearer 9,000*l.*"

Then we went on to other subjects.

Judging from the above conversation, I think it possible that the governor may, in order to earn merit with the central authorities, suggest their asserting themselves in connection with the location of buoys in Persian waters.

4. I have thought it advisable to place Government in possession of the precise local position fully by letter, and have forwarded a copy of this communication to His Majesty's Minister, but if the Government of India endorse my view as to the advisability of obtaining formal recognition from the Persian Government, and if loan negotiations are current, they will perhaps see fit to deal with the question by telegraph.

[53356] No. 144.

Lieutenant-Colonel Sir P. Cox to Sir Edward Grey.—(*Received December* 14.)

(No. 9. Confidential.)

Sir, *Bushire, November* 24, 1912.

IN continuation of my despatch No. 8 of to-day's date, I have the honour to enclose a copy of a despatch, with enclosures, which I have addressed to His Majesty's Minister in connection with the establishment of leading lights on the town residency flagstaff at this port.

I am forwarding a copy of the enclosures to this despatch to His Majesty's India Office.

I have, &c.

P. Z. COX, *Lieutenant-Colonel, British Resident in the Persian Gulf, and His Majesty's Consul-General for Fars, &c.*

Enclosure 1 in No. 144.

Lieutenant-Colonel Sir P. Cox to Sir W. Townley.

(No. 85.)

Sir, *Bushire, November* 24, 1912.

IN continuation of my despatch No. 48 of to-day's date, I have the honour to enclose, for your Excellency's information, a copy of a letter which I have addressed to the Government of India, in connection with the establishment of leading lights on the residency flagstaff at this port.

I am forwarding a copy of this despatch, with enclosures, to His Majesty's Foreign Office.

I have, &c.

P. Z. COX, *Lieutenant-Colonel, British Resident in the Persian Gulf, and His Majesty's Consul-General for Fars, &c.*

Enclosure 2 in No. 144

Lieutenant-Colonel Sir P. Cox to Government of India.

Sir, *Bushire, November* 21, 1912.

I HAVE the honour to report that the two dioptric lanterns, sanctioned for erection on the British residency flagstaff in Bushire town as leading lights to the anchorages of the port, have recently arrived, and in the course of a week or ten days, as soon as certain fittings, which have had to be made locally, have been completed, will be rigged for erection by H.M.S. "Lawrence." Meanwhile I beg to offer the following observations as to the attitude which the Russian consul-general or his Government, judging by recent indications, may be expected to assume towards the question.

2. The Government of India will recollect that when I first proposed the establishment of lanterns on the residency flagstaff here I did so on nautical grounds alone, as a result of representations by masters of steamers and others. It was not until February 1912 that the Russian consul-general commenced to show a light on his flagstaff. It proved unreliable and a source of danger to ships, and his Excellency Rear-Admiral Sir Edmond J. W. Slade, in consultation with me on the occasion of his visit to Bushire, addressed Government by telegram on the general subject, suggesting incidentally that the Russian Government might ultimately be asked to cease hoisting their lights. The Secretary of State for India telegraphed on the 27th May that the question of making such a communication to the Russian Government was under consideration, and on the 28th May the India Office addressed His Majesty's Foreign Office, suggesting that the proposed communication should be sent as soon as our lights were installed and in working order.

Soon after the arrival of the lanterns at Bushire, quite recently, my Russian colleague mentioned to one of my staff (who pleaded ignorance of details) that he had heard from his dragoman of our intention to establish a lantern on our flagstaff, and asked whether it was to be a red or white one, as M. de Piere, the Belgian commander of the Persian Government steam-ship "Persepolis," had suggested to him that it would be convenient if the Russian light was not the same colour as ours. M. Dmitrieff went on to observe that if we showed a white light he would change the colour of his light to red.

3. Apart from this topic, I have had reason to know that M. de Piere maintains intimate relations with the Russian consul-general, and there seem grounds for thinking that in the matter of lights and buoys the two are acting in concert, as only last week two buoys were found to have been laid in the inner anchorage by steam-ship "Persepolis." One of them, however, apparently got adrift twenty-four hours later, and has been lost; I have not yet ascertained definitely what has become of the second.

4. In view of the foregoing considerations, it seems probable that in exhibiting a light the Russian consul-general has been actuated by the desire, firstly, to forestall and now to compete with our lights, and that his action must be regarded as having a political bearing and treated as such. The probability is the more substantial, having regard to the interest displayed in the past, both by the Russian Legation in Teheran and by the Russian consul-general at Bushire, in the lighting and buoying of the Gulf generally. I venture, therefore, with great respect, to suggest that, if any communication is to be made to the Russian Government on the subject, it should be explicitly intimated that His Majesty's Government regard their control of the surveying, lighting, buoying, and pilotage of the Persian Gulf as being a part of the *status quo*, and amongst those special interests in the region the possession of which by Great Britain has been recognised by the Russian Government. It will be remembered that a communication on the above lines was made to the Russian Government in connection with quarantine arrangements in the Persian Gulf in July 1907, and with satisfactory results.

5. In order to prevent any feeling of soreness, and to allay possible apprehension on the part of the Russian Government that the sudden discontinuance of the light would involve a loss of prestige to their local representative, His Majesty's Government may perhaps consider it desirable to suggest to the Russian Government that the light should be discontinued whenever the present incumbent of the consulate-general next quits Bushire on leave or transfer. I see no serious objection, on local grounds, to his lights remaining as they are until then, though, of course, it would be preferable that they should be discontinued now.

6. I shall not fail to inform the Government of India by telegraph as soon as our shore-lights have actually been established.

I am forwarding a copy of this letter to His Majesty's Minister and to His Majesty's Foreign and India Offices.

I have, &c.

P. Z. COX, *Lieutenant-Colonel, British Resident in the Persian Gulf, and His Majesty's Consul-General for Fars, &c.*

[53259] No. 145.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 14.)

(No. 1044.)

Sir, *Constantinople, December 7*, 1912.

MR. MARLING, in his despatch No. 789 of the 17th September, submitted to you the proposals made by the Sublime Porte in connection with the revision of the organic statute of the Lebanon and the counter-proposals made by the French Embassy.

Since that date informal discussions have been continuing between the Sublime Porte and the French Embassy, but the former has not shown a very conciliatory attitude. The enclosed note has now been received from the Porte enclosing a draft protocol which it is suggested should be signed on the occasion of the appointment of the new Governor-General.

To a certain extent the Porte has given way to the demands that have been put forward.

The French Embassy objects, however, to the stipulation providing for a reference to the Court of Cassation at Constantinople of cases which have been decided by the courts of the Lebanon, such reference not being provided for by the statute of the Lebanon. The Druses, who look to us for protection, favour the retention of the usage which has grown up of a reference to the Court of Cassation.

With regard to the opening to commerce of the ports of the Lebanon the Sublime Porte are prepared to give way as regards the "petit cabotage" that is, to admit vessels up to 300 tons; but the French Ambassador, not only in the interests of French shipping, but in that of the Lebanon, is disposed to insist on a general opening of the ports.

The opposition of the Sublime Porte is based on the contention that if the ports of the Lebanon are thrown open to shipping generally it will not only injure Beirout, but may, they fear, eventually lead to the incorporation of that town in the Lebanon.

The French Ambassador has handed me a draft of the reply which he proposes to send in to the Sublime Porte in reply to their note and he is anxious that his colleagues, while not necessarily sending in the same note, should address the Sublime Porte on similar lines.

You will observe that in the concluding paragraph of M. Bompard's note it is implied that the nomination of the new Governor-General is dependent on the acceptance of the modifications and reforms proposed.

I venture to request instructions as to whether I may answer the Sublime Porte in the sense of M. Bompard's proposed reply.

I have, &c.

GERARD LOWTHER.

Enclosure 1 in No. 145.

Note verbale.

LE Ministère Impérial des Affaires Étrangères a l'honneur de soumettre, ci-joint, à l'Ambassade de Sa Majesté britannique le projet du protocole que l'on aurait à signer à l'occasion de la nomination d'un nouveau gouverneur au Liban, projet qui a été rédigé sur la base d'un échange de vues préalable à cet effet.

Ainsi que l'Ambassade de Sa Majesté britannique voudra bien le constater, le Gouvernement Impérial a consigné dans ce projet les modifications qui ont paru utiles pour le mode d'élection des membres du conseil administratif, les garanties à accorder

auxdits membres dans l'exercice de leurs fonctions, la nécessité de la revision du cadastre et le recensement pour servir d'assiette à de nouveaux impôts, l'extension aux matières commerciales de la compétence des tribunaux civils dans les affaires exclusivement libanaises, la faculté aux bateaux de vapeur du petit cabotage de faire des opérations douanières au Liban, et enfin l'augmentation sensible du chiffre actuel de la gendarmerie libanaise.

Pour ce qui est de ces trois derniers points, le Ministère Impérial croit devoir faire noter :—

1. Que relativement à la compétence aussi bien commerciale que civile et pénale des tribunaux libanais, le recours en cassation à Constantinople restera toujours ouvert comme par le passé.

2. Qu'en ce qui concerne la limite à 300 tonnes de jaugeage pour les vapeurs autorisés à faire des opérations de douane au Liban, cette question ayant soulevé de sérieuses objections et méritant un ample examen, le nouveau gouverneur sera chargé de faire, après étude sur les lieux et références aux autorités des vilayets limitrophes, un rapport sur la possibilité et l'opportunité qu'il y aurait d'étendre l'autorisation requise à des vapeurs d'un plus fort tonnage sans nuire aux intérêts des régions voisines du Liban.

3. Que pour ce qui est des frais de l'augmentation de la gendarmerie, y compris le traitement de l'officier qui sera envoyé au Liban par le Gouvernement Impérial pour en effectuer la réorganisation, ils seront attribués au chapitre du Mahmoulat de manière à ne pas constituer une charge pour le Trésor Impérial.

Le Ministère Impérial aime à espérer que dans ces conditions l'Ambassade de Sa Majesté britannique, conjointement avec les mission des autres Grandes Puissances signataires des actes relatifs au Liban, voudra bien exprimer son accord sur le projet en question afin qu'il soit procédé un moment plus tôt [*sic*] à la signature du protocole relatif à la nomination d'un nouveau gouverneur.

Sublime Porte, le 4 décembre, 1912.

Annex to Note verbale.

ARTICLE 1er. Par analogie avec le mode d'élection en vigueur à Zahlé, les membres du conseil administratif seront élus dans les arrondissements par les cheiks de villages comptant 100 contribuables ou davantage, un délégué par 100 contribuables. Le membre du conseil pour Zahlé continuera à être élu, comme précédemment, par les délégués nommés à raison de 1 par 50 contribuables.

Le nombre des membres du conseil administratif élus par chaque circonscription, et leur proportion au point de vue des communautés représentées au sein du conseil, ne seront pas modifiés. Toutefois, les habitants du mudiriet de Deïr-el-Kamar, privés jusqu'à présent de représentation au conseil, seront appelés à y envoyer un membre de leur rite, et, d'autre part, le membre druze du conseil, élu jusqu'à présent au Djezzin, sera élu dans le Chouf.

Art. 2. Aucun membre du conseil administratif, une fois élu, ne pourra être suspendu par le gouverneur, en cas de faute, abus ou manquement dans les devoirs de sa charge de conseiller administratif, qu'après enquête et sur avis conforme du conseil administratif, auquel les résultats de l'enquête seront communiqués.

Art. 3. Le budget de prévision des recettes et des dépenses sera établi par le gouverneur, avec le concours du conseil administratif; il sera dressé et publié trois mois avant l'ouverture de l'exercice financier qu'il concerne.

Art. 4. Le gouverneur présentement nommé étudiera la revision du cadastre, du recensement et des diverses taxes actuellement perçues; il procédera également à l'examen des questions accessoires telles que celle des terrains "haradj" ou "émirié," qu'il est désirable de faire rentrer dans la règle commune; d'après les données ainsi recueillies, et six mois au plus tard avant l'expiration de ses pouvoirs, il présentera à la Sublime Porte ses propositions pour l'établissement du montant de l'impôt qui sera ensuite fixé d'accord entre la Sublime Porte et les Puissances.

Les comptes des exercices antérieurs feront l'objet, à cette occasion, d'une liquidation définitive.

Art. 5. La défense aux bâtiments à vapeur de faire leurs opérations aux douanes maritimes établies sur territoire libanais est levée seulement pour les vapeurs qui ne dépasseraient pas 300 tonnes de jaugeage.

Mais il reste bien entendu que toutes les taxes douanières perçues dans l'Empire, sans exception, continueront à être également perçues dans le Liban directement par les employés et au profit du Trésor Impérial, les douanes y étant placées exactement sur le même pied et régies par les mêmes règlements que les autres douanes de l'Empire. Il va sans dire que toutes les interdictions édictées par le Gouvernement Impérial concernant les armes, matières explosibles ou tous autres articles de quelque nature qu'ils soient, de même que les règlements sanitaires, sont également et strictement applicables dans tous les ports du littoral libanais.

Art. 6. En matière commerciale dans les affaires où les parties seraient toutes Libanaises, les tribunaux de la Montagne seront compétents en première et deuxième instances.

Art. 7. L'effectif du corps de police libanais prévu par l'article 14 du règlement de 1864 sera de 1,200 hommes, et son instruction sera confiée pendant la durée nécessaire à l'un des officiers au service de la Turquie pour la réorganisation de la gendarmerie.

Enclosure 2 in No. 145.

Draft Note verbale.

L'AMBASSADE de France a reçu le projet de protocole à signer à l'occasion de la nomination d'un nouveau gouverneur au Liban que le Ministère Impérial des Affaires Étrangères a bien voulu lui adresser le 4 courant avec la note verbale. Elle a l'honneur de remercier le Ministère de cet envoi.

Les trois premiers articles de ce projet de protocole ne soulèvent aucune objection de l'Ambassade de France, qui les accepte volontiers dans leur teneur.

Il en serait de même de l'article 4 si les mots "d'un nouveau régime financier" qui figuraient à la fin du premier paragraphe dans le précédent projet de la Sublime Porte y étaient maintenus au lieu de ceux "du montant de l'impôt," qui ne répondent pas au contexte de l'article.

En ce qui concerne l'article 5, l'Ambassade de France ne saurait accepter son dernier membre de phrase ainsi conçu: "seulement pour les vapeurs qui ne dépasseraient pas 300 tonnes de jaugeage." Elle demande la suppression de cette limitation comme portant atteinte aussi bien aux droits de la navigation française qu'aux intérêts des Libanais.

L'article 6 ne donnerait lieu à aucune observation de l'Ambassade de France si la note verbale qui accompagne le projet de protocole ne spécifiait que le recours en cassation à Constantinople restera toujours ouvert comme par le passé. Un pareil recours est en opposition avec les dispositions du statut libanais, et l'Ambassade de France ne saurait en conséquence en reconnaître la légitimité.

Il en est de même de l'imputation au chapitre des Mahmoudats des frais provenant des mesures prévues par l'article 7 pour doter le Liban d'un service de gendarmerie adéquat à ses besoins; l'article 14 du statut met en effet à la charge de l'impôt général l'entretien de ce corps à raison de 7 hommes par 1,000 habitants, limite bien au-dessous de laquelle se tient le chiffre de 1,200 hommes prévu au projet de protocole.

L'Ambassade de France se plaît à penser que la Porte voudra bien tenir compte des observations ci-dessus pour lui permettre d'accéder, comme elle le souhaite et le réclame depuis huit mois, à l'invitation que le Ministère Impérial des Affaires Étrangères lui fait l'honneur de lui adresser en vue de la nomination d'un nouveau Gouverneur du Liban.

[53269] No. 146.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 14.)

(No. 1056.)

Sir, *Constantinople, December 10, 1912.*

WITH reference to your telegram No. 1094 of the 6th December, I have the honour to report that the agent of Messrs. Jacksons states that he has been informed by the Turkish Government that a sum of £ T. 23,400 has been sent to Bagdad on account of the irrigation works.

Although this sum is much lower than that mentioned in your telegram, it is wonderful that the Turkish Government in the present situation of their finances have been able to produce even this amount.

I have, &c.
GERARD LOWTHER.

[53400] No. 147.

Admiralty to Foreign Office.—(Received December 14.)

Sir, *Admiralty, December 13, 1912.*

I AM commanded by my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty to transmit herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, a copy of a letter from the commander-in-chief, Mediterranean, dated the 28th ultimo, enclosing a letter of proceedings and a report on the state of affairs on the Syrian coast from the commanding officer, His Majesty's ship "Barham."

I am, &c.
W. GRAHAM GREENE.

Enclosure 1 in No. 147.

Commander-in-chief, Mediterranean, to Admiralty.

November 28, 1912.

SUBMITTED.

His Majesty's ships "Black Prince," "Barham," and "Prometheus" are now detached for the protection of British life and property on the Syrian coast, and are visiting the principal ports systematically, acting in consultation with the British consul-general at Beirout.

A. BERKELEY MILNE, *Admiral.*

Enclosure 2 in No. 147.

Commander Cotton to Commander-in-chief, Mediterranean.

Sir, *H.M.S. "Barham" at Beirout, November 11, 1912.*

IN continuation of my letter No. 67 of the 5th instant from Cyprus, I have the honour to report that I received orders from the commander-in-chief at 9:30 A.M. on the 7th November to proceed to the Syrian coast. I left Famagusta at 1 P.M. with coal in bunkers complete, 5 tons in stokeholds and 5 tons on deck.

2. I arrived at Alexandretta at 7 A.M. on the 8th instant, and immediately communicated with the acting vice-consular agent. As Asiatic cholera is prevalent at Alexandretta, he came off to the ship, and lay in his boat alongside the gangway.

3. I left Alexandretta at 6 A.M. on the 9th November, and arrived at Latakya on the same day. The acting consular agent came off at once, but again, as Asiatic cholera is prevalent there, he did not come on board.

4. I left Latakya at 6 A.M. on the 10th November, and arrived at Tripoli at 2 P.M. same day. The acting vice-consul came off, and I landed with him to pay an official visit to the mutessarif. Owing to a strong north-easterly wind and heavy swell, I left at 8, and arrived at Beirout (having steamed at slow speed) at 7 A.M. this day. I found here His Majesty's ship "Prometheus."

5. I landed at 9:30 A.M., and called on His Britannic Majesty's consul-general, and proceeded with him to call on the authorities.

6. I enclose a separate report on state of affairs at Syrian ports and coast.

I have, &c.
R. S. COTTON.

Enclosure 3 in No. 147.

Commander Cotton to Commander-in-chief, Mediterranean.

Sir, *H.M.S. "Barham" at Beirout, November* 11, 1912.

I HAVE the honour to report as follows on the general situation, and on the different ports visited on the Syrian coast:—

2. *Alexandretta.*—A considerable amount of unrest amongst the Moslem population and a corresponding feeling of uneasiness amongst the Christian community exists.

A Bulgarian Christian was killed at night-time by a Moslem night watchman on the 3rd November, and a German subject was held up and beaten by the same man the same night. Both men were in the employ of the German Railway Company. The culprit was arrested, and is now in gaol awaiting trial. I have instructed the acting consular agent, who is also acting German consular agent, to watch the case and see that justice is done, but under no circumstances to try to force matters in the present state of affairs.

The Kaimakam of Alexandretta has about 30 gendarmes at his disposal, and has informed the British consular agent that he has sufficient force to preserve order and to protect the Christians. This I doubt.

Asiatic cholera is prevalent here, being brought in by the Asiatic troops on their way to Aleppo.

3. *Latakya.*—All quiet. One Sal'af Pasha is trying to stir up the Moslem population against the Christians, and is preaching a holy war, but so far no one appears to have taken any notice of him. This man is reported to be a British Indian subject deported from India, by order, with his family. He resided at Constantinople for a short time, but was sent to Latakya by the authorities.

Asiatic cholera is very prevalent from the same cause as at Alexandretta.

4. *Tripoli.*—All quiet when I left there. General feeling of unrest on both Moslem and Christian sides. The Christians had a scare on the 9th November, but, as far as I could gather, for no cause whatever. I called on the mutessarif and informed him that I had orders from my Government to protect the lives and property of all British subjects and also German subjects. He informed me that the British were always welcomed in Tripoli, and that he could guarantee that no harm would befall either German or British subjects, and that he had sufficient force to preserve order. As the Mutessarif of Tripoli is a very weak person, and the Government practically nil, I told him that I thought it only right to inform him that, in the event of any disturbance taking place, and any British or German subjects being maltreated, the British and German Governments would hold him personally responsible.

5. *Beirout.*—All quiet outwardly.

6. *Hinterland of Alexandretta. Adana.*—Situation very bad. Continual collisions between Kurds and Armenians, isolated outrages on Christians, and one Armenian storekeeper carried off into the hills.

Aleppo.—Outwardly all quiet, but reservists are being disbanded, and food is short.

Damascus.—Outwardly calm.

7. *Hinterland of Tripoli.*—Situation is bad. The Moslem tribes in the interior are in a great state of excitement, and it will need very little to start them off. The same applies to the hinterland of Beirout.

8. The whole situation in Syria appears to me to be like a powder magazine; it only needs a spark to set the whole place in a ferment. The Moslems are very angry with their own Government at Constantinople for their state of unpreparedness, and are very sore on account of the continual successes of the Balkan States, and further, because the news published in these parts by the Government is all false, and they learn the truth from the Christians. Further, as the religious war is now being preached, a certain number of the Moslems are becoming fanatical, and they may supply the spark necessary to set the train going. The local papers are now commencing to print inflammatory articles, which will further excite the Moslem population.

There is no doubt that the presence of a British war-ship has a distinctly quietening

effect on the Moslem population, and I therefore intend to show the flag as often as possible at the various coast towns, working throughout after consultation with His Britannic Majesty's consul-general here.

9. I intend leaving here shortly for Alexandretta, taking the British vice-consul back with me, as he has been to Beirout on leave.

I have, &c.
R. S. COTTON.

[53280] No. 148.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received December 14.)

Sir, *India Office, December* 13, 1912.

I AM directed by the Secretary of State for India to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 9th instant regarding the future of the Anglo-Persian Oil Company in relation to the commercial and political position of this country in Persia and the Persian Gulf.

The Marquess of Crewe observes that it appears to be assumed that the absorption of the company by the interests represented by the Shell Company will be the inevitable result of the refusal of His Majesty's Government to accord the former diplomatic or even financial support. His Lordship is not aware of the foundation upon which this assumption rests. It is indeed obvious that a rapprochement between the two concerns is likely to take place, but it appears to him more probable that this will take the form either of an arrangement between them regulating the price of oil, or of one whereby the Shell Company will (as has been done in the case of the Burmah Oil Company) take over the British company's output, minus a stipulated amount which the latter will market itself. Either arrangement would doubtless raise the price of oil (a matter for the consideration of the Admiralty) and increase foreign interests in the Persian Gulf, but neither would of itself suffice to give those interests a footing in the interior of Persia.

The actual absorption of the Anglo-Persian Oil Company, in the sense that the large area over which its concession extends would pass under foreign influence, would raise very wide issues, and before dealing with them Lord Crewe would suggest that the immediate question should be more closely examined from the point of view indicated above; and the company might perhaps be asked to undertake to give His Majesty's Government timely notice before entering upon any arrangement that would involve absorption.

I am, &c.
T. W. HOLDERNESS.

[53453] No. 149.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 15.)

(No. 721.)
(Telegraphic.) R. *Constantinople, December* 15, 1912.

YOUR telegram No. 1103 of 12th December.

Minister of Finance has expressed to manager of National Bank willingness to pay, but unfortunately there are no funds available here. He has promised to examine whether means can be found on the spot.

Mr. Eady, Jackson's representative, has left for England.

Fact that men may be left without work at Bagdad does not under present circumstances appeal to Ottoman Government.

[53504] No. 150.

Sir G. Louther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 16.)

(No. 718.)
(Telegraphic.) R. *Constantinople, December* 14, 1912.

LEBANON.

My despatch No. 1044.

The French Ambassador has sent in note to the Porte. Having gone so far, it will be difficult for him to recede, and presumably it will be necessary for us to support the French in the matter.

[53504] No. 151.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Louther.

(No. 1107.)
(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, December* 17, 1912.

YOUR despatch No. 1044 of 7th December and telegram No. 718 of 14th December: Lebanon.

I gather that only passage in French note to which you take exception is that relating to reference to Court of Cassation at Constantinople.

As this point is not mentioned in any draft, your note might omit all reference to it, if you think retention of practice important in interests of Druses.

Would this meet your French colleague's views?

If so, and if you agree, you may send in note, provided your Russian colleague is similarly instructed.

[53983] No. 152.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received December 18.)

Sir, *India Office, December* 17, 1912.

WITH reference to my letter of 17th July last I am directed by the Secretary of State for India to forward, for the information of the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, copy of a telegram from the Government of India, from which it will be seen that they have authorised Sir P. Cox to treat with the candidates for the succession to the late Sheikh of Debai with a view to the establishment of a wireless telegraph station at that town instead of at Zora.

With Sir E. Grey's concurrence the Marquess of Crewe proposes to confirm the action of the Government of India, subject to consideration by him of Sir P. Cox's further report before they commit themselves to definite arrangements.

I am, &c.
T. W. HOLDERNESS.

Enclosure in No. 152.

Government of India to the Marquess of Crewe.

(Telegraphic.) P. *December* 11, 1912.

TELEGRAM, dated 5th December, received from resident, Persian Gulf, to Government of India, to following effect:—

"It is reported by telegram by the senior naval officer, who visited Debai as requested, that on or about 29th November the sheikh succumbed to paralytic stroke. He had been ailing. There is no son left eligible to succeed, and consequently there will possibly be two or three rival claimants. In my letter of 30th April, 1911 (forwarded as enclosure to weekly letter of 18th May, 1911, from Secretary, Foreign Department) paragraphs 11 and 12, I made a proposal, partly prompted by of the late sheikh's unsatisfactory character. It is hoped that in course of time Zora will

attract as a centre; but we already have to hand a large and prosperous town, in Debai, and naturally to instal the telegraph office there instead of at Zora (where its installation would be more expensive) would bring more direct and more immediate benefits to our merchants. I think that opportunity is afforded by sheikh's death to negotiate with successor, by refusing to recognise any successor unless he agrees to welcome telegraph office and telegraph officials and gives all assistance required to acquire quarters and erect engine room. The candidates for succession could be so negotiated with over the question as to leave us opening to fall back with full prestige on Zora as alternative, if eventually there appears to be undue risk or difficulty in way of setting up the telegraph at Debai. Please inform me of your views as early as possible."

I have given Cox permission to negotiate on lines indicated with the sheikh's successor; but before entering on definite arrangement a further report will be furnished by him.

[54224] No. 153.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received December 19.)

Sir, *India Office, December* 18, 1912.

I AM directed by the Secretary of State for India to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 13th instant regarding the arms trade on the El Katr peninsula.

From the Government of India's letter of the 25th November to the political resident, copy of which was received by the last mail and is enclosed, it would appear that they do not consider any immediate action necessary, and the Marquess of Crewe is inclined to agree with them. But it is doubtless most important to forestall any attempt to set up a direct trade with El Katr; a copy of this correspondence will therefore be sent to the Government of India, and they will no doubt make any proposals that they may consider desirable.

I am, &c.
T. W. HOLDERNESS.

Enclosure 1 in No. 153.

Government of India to Lieutenant-Colonel Sir P. Cox.

(Telegraphic.) P. *November* 24, 1912.

ARMS traffic.

Your letter of the 24th October.

Paragraph 4, warnings to three sheikhs as recommended, approved.

Enclosure 2 in No. 153.

Government of India to Lieutenant-Colonel Sir P. Cox.

(Confidential.) *November* 25, 1912.

I AM directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter, dated the 27th October, 1912, regarding the arms traffic on the Katar coast.

2. The Government of India are of opinion that it would be useless to expect His Majesty's Government to press negotiations at the present moment. Should, however (and I am to request that a watchful eye may be kept on this), any attempt be made to ship arms direct to Katar, Government would have good grounds for summary action of an effective nature.

[54641] No. 154.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 23.)

(No. 1068.)

Sir, *Constantinople, December* 15, 1912.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 828 of the 8th October last, I have the honour to forward herewith a despatch from His Majesty's vice-consul at Adana, reporting on the work done on the Bagdad Railway up to date.

I have, &c.

GERARD LOWTHER.

Enclosure 1 in No. 154.

Vice-Consul Matthews to Sir G. Lowther.

(No. 47.)

Sir, *Adana, December* 9, 1912.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 31 of the 1st October last, I have the honour to transmit to your Excellency a summary of the work done on the Bagdad Railway, bringing previous reports up to date. I find that the statement at the end of the second paragraph of the despatch referred to above, that Ilan Kaleh is on the left bank of the Jihun, is probably inaccurate.

I have, &c.

W. D. W. MATTHEWS.

Enclosure 2 in No. 154.

Summary of Work done on the Bagdad Railway.

THE construction of the Bagdad Railway has proceeded steadily during the years 1910–12. The line beyond Ulu Kishla has been laid to within a few kilometres of Bozanti, and will probably be opened to traffic in 1913. Between Bozanti and Dorak work is proceeding on the tunnels through the Taurus, of which there will be at least ten, the longest being one of 3 kilom. some 15 kilom. beyond Bozanti. There is a daily train service on the section of 140 kilom. from Dorak to Mamureh, viâ Yenijeh, Adana, Missis, Hamidieh, Toprak Kaleh, and Osmanieh, which was opened to traffic in April 1912. Considerable progress has been made on the short but difficult section from Mamureh to Baghcheh, which should be ready for traffic in 1913. Near Baghcheh a tunnel of 5 kilom., of which about 1½ kilom. have been completed, is being made through the Amanus. It is stated that the Taurus and Amanus tunnels will be finished in 1915. Work is also proceeding on the branch line from Toprak Kaleh to Alexandretta, about 70 kilom. in length, which is unlikely to be ready for traffic before the end of 1913.

When the branch line to Alexandretta is opened, it is probable that the produce of the eastern section of the Cilician Plain, most of which is at present exported from Ayas, will be exported from Alexandretta.

[54460] No. 155.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 21.)

(No. 1069.)

Sir, *Constantinople, December* 16, 1912.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 599 of the 25th August, 1911, I have the honour to forward herewith a despatch from His Majesty's consul-general at Beirout, reporting on the termination of the trial of the persons accused of participation in the theft of ancient relics at Jerusalem.

I have, &c.

GERARD LOWTHER.

Enclosure in No. 155.

Consul-General Cumberbatch to Sir G. Lowther.

(No. 80.)

Sir, *Beirout, December* 5, 1912.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 58 of the 16th August, 1911, on the subject of the Jerusalem ancient relics case, I have the honour to report that it was only on the 3rd instant that the Sheikh Khalil El-Danaf with his two sons and the Armenian Dragoman Makasdar were released from prison, where they have been in detention over eighteen months.

The court found the prisoners guilty on the lesser charge of misdemeanour (junha) and sentenced the sheikh to 12 months' imprisonment, and the other three to two months, but as they have more than expiated these terms in prison they were all liberated the same day.

This morning the sheikh called on me to express his gratitude to His Majesty's embassy and consulate-general for the kind interest taken in his case and mentioned his intention of appealing to the Court of Cassation against the unjust sentence of the Beirout court, and if he succeeds he will petition the Grand Vizier for his reintegration as chief of the mosque of Omar, in obtaining which he hopes he may be granted the friendly assistance of His Majesty's embassy when the time comes.

In the meantime I beg leave to submit that in my humble opinion it would only be just if, as a compensation for all the sufferings the sheikh and his sons have endured on Mr. Parker's account, and for the loss of their employment that gentleman should be approached with a view to his paying them a substantial indemnification.

It appears that the only monetary help offered to them so far was the wherewithal to pay their travelling expenses back to Jerusalem, which they indignantly refused.

M. Makasdar, for whom so much has been done by Mr. Ryan and myself, has also called on me to express his grateful thanks.

I have, &c.

H. A. CUMBERBATCH.

[54645] No. 156.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 23.)

(No. 1083.)

Sir, *Constantinople, December* 17, 1912.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 1010 of the 29th November, I have the honour to report that a paragraph has recently appeared in the local press to the effect that the Government has been considering the necessity of introducing reforms into the vilayets in Asia Minor, and in this connection has decided to engage foreign specialists, three or four to act as advisers to the respective departments, and sixteen, the majority of whom are to be British, to be sent to Asia Minor. Instructions, the paper adds, are to be sent to the Turkish Ambassadors abroad in this sense, and a commission of officials from the Ministries of Finance, Interior, and Education will be formed under the presidency of Kiamil Pasha, the Grand Vizier, to discuss the question.

I have, however, seen no indication lately that the Turkish Government have seriously considered the putting into operation of such a measure, though in some quarters I have heard it mentioned that a system of this nature will become imperative, once peace is declared, if trouble is to be avoided in Asia Minor.

The urgency of reform in regard to Kurdistan is shown by a report on the present state of affairs in that province, dated the 1st October, from His Majesty's vice-consul at Mosul, of which I have the honour to enclose a copy herewith.

In a subsequent despatch, dated the 25th October, Mr. Hony reports the recall of the Vali of Mosul, Tahir Pasha, who had played a prominent part in "working" the last election on behalf of the late Committee Government. His slackness in punishing authors of various serious crimes had earned him the enmity of many, notably of the Catholics and the French vice-consul, for failing to punish one Hadji Mohammed-en-Nejefi, who had murdered a member of a delegation from a Syrian Catholic village while on his way to Mosul to complain of his (Hadji Mohammed's) illegal exactions from the villagers.

The head of the Yezidis having been murdered in August at the instigation of his

wife, one of the Yezidi chiefs killed five men and two women who were implicated in the murder. Another Yezidi murdered a prominent Jacobite within a day's journey of Mosul and has remained unpunished.

During September, 167 people were criminally killed or wounded in the caza of Mosul, the police being both insufficient and incompetent.

The Hamawand Kurds are in rebellion, and have held up two or three caravans on the road from Bagdad to Suleimanieh. They have taken the precaution of sending their families over the frontier in case the Government should send a punitive expedition against them.

I have, &c.
GERARD LOWTHER.

Enclosure in No. 156.

Vice-Consul Hony to Mr. Marling.

(No. 17.)

Sir, *Mosul, October* 1, 1912

I HAVE the honour to submit the following account of the present state of Kurdistan. I should like to preface this report by saying that the appalling state of affairs there is known to very few. There are no resident consuls and very few travellers, and so the world remains in ignorance; but I feel sure that if it were possible to collect details of all the crimes committed there, they would be found to equal both in quality and quantity those enumerated in the monthly Crimes Report of Macedonia compiled by His Majesty's consul-general at Salonica.

After the proclamation of the constitution, Kurdistan became reasonably quiet; but little by little, as it was discovered that there was not much difference between the new Government and the old, the Kurds resumed their former habits, and now the condition of the country is as bad as in the worst times of the old régime. Brigandage is rife in every part, and there is no security of life anywhere. The Kurds murder one another with the cold-blooded treachery which is a characteristic of their race. But, above all, it is the Christians that suffer. Every Kurdish aga owns Christian villages and regards them as his milch-cows, from whom he extorts as much as he can, whether in corvée or produce. When one Kurdish aga has a grudge against another, he sends his armed men, not to fight the other Kurds—that would be far too dangerous, for they too possess guns—but to the Christian villages owned by their enemy; here they can plunder and kill to their hearts' content, with no danger to themselves. The owner of the plundered villages retaliates by falling on one of the villages belonging to the other side, and so *ad infinitum*.

Thus these poor folk are oppressed in every way by their own aga, and liable to be killed and plundered by his enemies.

I will here relate a few stories, for the truth of which I have the best authority.

In August 1909 the whole of the valley of Lizan was burnt by Reshid Beg, Mir of Berwar; the English mission-house was among those burnt. No redress has ever been obtained.

In the summer of 1909 Atosh Kurds killed Kina of Chumba and his son in the presence of his wife, and forced the widow to drink her husband's blood; they stole 300 sheep. No redress.

In June 1910, in the plain of Cavvar, at the village of Chardiwa (one hour from the kaimakamlik of Diza), local Kurds tried to carry off a woman and make her a Moslem by force; on her refusal they killed both her and her husband. No redress.

In August 1910 Atosh Kurds carried off 7,000 sheep belonging to the village of Ashita; they killed 10 men, including 2 zaptiehs, and wounded 8. The only redress obtained was the restoration of 3,000 sheep.

The two rival Sheikhs of Shemsdinan are perpetually quarrelling, and each bullies the Christians who adhere to his rival's side. The Nestorian Archbishop tried to side with neither and keep the peace between them; the result was that he was so badly treated by both parties that he fled to Qudshanis and has not yet ventured to return.

There is a perpetual feud between the Aga of Chal and the Christians of Tkuri; both sides are in the wrong; but recently the Aga of Chal endeavoured to bring about a coalition of all the Kurds in order to massacre the Christians. This was only frustrated by the Sheikh of Barzan, who said he would allow no such thing. Now the Aga of Chal is the Government mudir of that district!

On my journey from Qudshanis to Bihaydi I stopped a night at the Christian

village of Akri in Berwar. The inhabitants told me that they were in great anxiety because they had heard that the Kurds of Pinianish were meditating a raid upon them. Three days after the villagers of Malikta, near Akri, came to Bibaydi and showed the bloody clothes of a shepherd who had been stabbed to death by these Kurds, who had plundered the village of everything it possessed. This village belongs to Reshid Beg of Berwar and was plundered by the men of his enemy, the Aga of Chal, the Government mudir.

The Christians of Berwar sent one day to complain to Dr. Wigram that Reshid Beg demanded so much corvée of them that they had no time left in which to attend to their own crops.

A certain brigand named Mir Mihi came not long ago to a village near Qudshanis and demanded 20*l.*, saying that if that sum was not produced by next morning he would kill twenty men; the villagers came by night to Qudshanis, and Mr. MacGillivray, of the Archbishop's mission, gave them the money. He asked why they did not go to the kaimakam, who was living only half-an-hour off; they replied that he would do nothing, and Mir Mihi would get to hear of it, and they would be treated worse than ever.

The Christians of Reikan sent me a letter with a long list of the animals stolen from them by Suto, Aga of Oramar.

After the death of Mirza Ali, numerous Nestorians came and kissed my hand and thanked me fervently for having delivered them from one of their oppressors; one said that he had stolen his sheep, another his donkey, a third that he had killed his brother. This is the man whom the kaimakam of Julamerk describes as "good and innocent."

The Government does nothing to remedy this state of affairs; in nine cases out of ten the officials are themselves Kurds who from childhood up have been taught to recognise this treatment of Christians as the proper thing, and who do not see why they should do anything to put an end to so admirable a practice. And yet it would not be so very difficult to bring a certain amount of security into the country. The Kurds are cowards at heart, and one or two sharp examples would keep them quiet for some time. In the south the arrest of one or two prominent agas at the time of the constitution has kept the country quiet up till now, although I hear that the Hamawand are again on the war-path; this is due to the feeling that the Government is unstable, even at head-quarters; but let the Government once more give definite proof of its power and they will quickly settle down once more. If Reshid Beg, the Aga of Chal, Suto Beg, and one or two others were summoned to Musul and kept as hostages for the good behaviour of their districts, I venture to predict there would not be much trouble for some time to come.

Most of the sympathy bestowed on the intriguing Greeks and Bulgars of Macedonia would be far more profitably bestowed on these poor Christians, who have done nothing to merit this oppression, and who would be loyal and useful citizens if only they received anything like fair treatment.

I have, &c.
H. C. HONY.

[54651] No. 157.

Sir E. Goschen to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 23.)

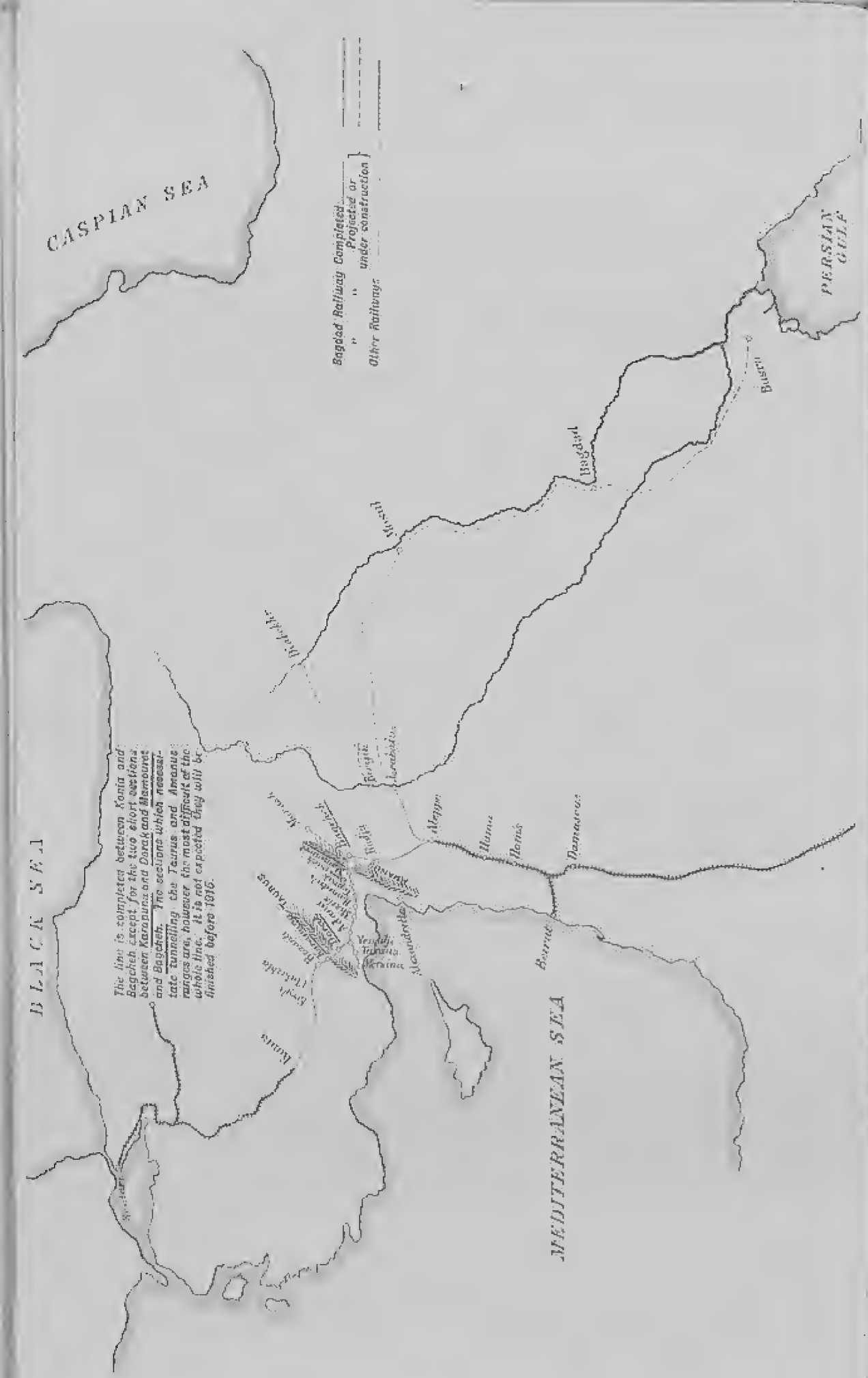
(No. 525.)

Sir, *Berlin, December 17, 1912.*

THE "Lokalanzeiger" yesterday announced that a telegram had been received from Aleppo reporting that the new sections of the Bagdad Railway from Aleppo to Radju in the Amanus Mountains, and from Aleppo to Jerebulus on the Euphrates, were opened to traffic on the 15th instant in the presence of the local authorities. The new sections extend over 200 kilom. (125 miles).

I have, &c.
W. E. GOSCHEN.

[See Map facing this page.]



[54647] No. 158.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 23.)

(No. 1085.)

Sir, *Constantinople, December 18, 1912.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit to you herewith copies of a despatch which I have received from His Majesty's consul at Bussorah, concerning the arrangement made between Messrs. Lynch Brothers and the Bagdad Railway Company, relative to the transport of their railway material from Bussorah to Bagdad.

Certain rumours have lately been circulated here, and some newspapers have even published articles to the effect that the Ottoman Government were making objections to the formation of the new subsidiary company.

I therefore caused enquiries to be made at the Ministry of Public Works here, from which it appears that the Ministry has not, so far, been approached on the subject of the recognition of the company.

With regard to the arrangement already made between Messrs. Lynch and the Bagdad Railway Company, the Ministry have, I understand, raised no objection.

I have, &c.
GERARD LOWTHER.

Enclosure in No. 158.

Consul Crow to Sir G. Lowther.

(No. 51. Confidential.)

Sir, *Bussorah, October 29, 1912.*

I HAVE received the following information from Mr. Tod, managing director of Messrs. Lynch Brothers, at Bagdad, respecting the present arrangements with the Société de Transports fluviaux en Orient, for the transport of the Bagdad Railway material.

The agreement signed between the Bagdad Railway Company and the Société de Transports is for the carriage of a quantity not exceeding 150,000 tons of railway material from Bussorah to Bagdad in four years, of which the Bagdad Railway Company guarantees to provide a minimum quantity of 100,000 tons in three years, at the following rates:—

100,000 tons in 36 months at 8*s.* 9*d.* per ton; or
120,000 tons in 48 months at 10*s.* per ton; or
130,000 tons in 48 months at 9*s.* per ton.

This freight is to be paid to the Société de Transports, who are to provide five tugs and eighteen barges for the purpose, and lease them to the railway company under article 9 of the Bagdad Railway Convention. The railway company have appointed Messrs. Lynch Brothers their managing agents to work the fleet and forward the material.

By agreement between Messrs. Lynch Brothers and the Bagdad Railway Company, Messrs. Lynch Brothers undertake to forward from 2,500 to 3,500 tons per mensem, and the railway company agrees to always keep 4,000 tons ready for them.

The transhipment of the material from the ocean steamers at Bussorah is to be effected by Messrs. Robert Wönckhaus and Co., at 1*s.* 11*d.* per ton, but if they are unable to carry out this arrangement, Messrs. Lynch Brothers contract to do the work at 2*s.* 3*d.* per ton.

Messrs. Lynch Brothers act in the matter solely as agents for the Bagdad Railway Company for the transport of the material and the service of the vessels and barges, and will receive the sum of 14*s.* per ton of cargo carried for the administration, up-keep, and management of the vessels, and this sum includes the cost of stores, coal, and all expenses. The cargo and all plant and material imported for forwarding it is admitted duty free into Turkey. If 150,000 tons are not provided, they receive as follows:—

For 100,000 tons in 36 months at 14*s.* 6*d.* per ton; or
120,000 tons in 48 months at 14*s.* 6*d.* per ton; or
130,000 tons in 48 months at 14*s.* 3*d.* per ton.

The Bagdad Railway Company guarantees to provide a minimum quantity of 100,000 tons in three years.

Messrs. R. Wönckhaus and Co. have to tranship the material from the ocean steamers and deliver it to Messrs. Lynch Brothers, as agents for the Bagdad Railway Company.

The fleet is at present to kept quite separate from Messrs. Lynch Brothers' river steamers, although Mr. Tod hinted confidentially that attempts to bring about a fusion might be made later. The vessels and barges of the Société de Transports fluviaux will not proceed down river lower than the Bagdad Railway material depôt at Maghil, which is about 4 miles above Bussorah.

The agreement is to start from the 1st February, 1913, and until that date private arrangements have been made between the Bagdad Railway Company and Messrs. R. Wönckhaus and Co. for forwarding the material. This is being done, I understand, through the present river steamer services. Messrs. R. Wönckhaus withdraw from these operations on the 31st January, 1913, and the new arrangement then begins.

The fleet, as stated, will consist of five tugs and eighteen barges. The first tug arrived on the 27th October; others are due on the 13th March, 13th April, and 13th May, and the fifth is to arrive in six months time of the last-mentioned date.

Of the barges, two arrived on the 27th October, four are due on the 1st December, and three are to arrive on the 1st of each month up to April 1913.

Mr. Tod informed me that up to date about 1,500 tons of railway material have been sent up to Bagdad by Messrs. R. Wönckhaus and Co.

I have, &c.
F. E. CROW.

[54901] No. 159.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 23.)

(No. 736.)

(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, December 23, 1912.*

PROTOCOL appointing present Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs Governor-General of the Lebanon signed to-day by Minister for Foreign Affairs and Ambassadors. Text of protocol by post.

(Sent to Beirout.)

[53729] No. 160.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Lowther.

(No. 1115.)

(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, December 23, 1912.*

YOUR private letter of the 11th December to Mr. Maxwell: Mesopotamia oilfields.

I am advised that upon the documents we possess there is no reason to assume that the Germans have a secure title to an option. There may be other agreements (see Sir N. O'Conor's despatch No. 184 of 20th March, 1906) of which we have not seen the text, but on the facts as known to us there is nothing to prevent His Majesty's Government pressing for a concession for D'Arcy, who bases his claim on a promise of the Turkish Cabinet consequent on his persistent application for the concession for a long term of years.

Your Excellency should enquire whether the Porte has entered into agreements subsequent to the 1904 agreement, and you should make an immediate communication to the Turkish Government, on the lines of my telegram No. 1092 of 6th December, in writing, so that the Minister for Foreign Affairs can bring it to the knowledge of his colleagues and the ministries concerned.

Do you consider moment opportune for D'Arcy to send out representative? If so, one will be sent early in January.

[55016] No. 161.

Smyrna-Aidin Railway Company to Sir Edward Grey.—(*Received December* 24.)

Winchester House, Old Broad Street, London,
December 23, 1912.

Sir,

I HAVE been requested by the president to inform you that a copy of your letter of the 25th November has been forwarded to our general manager, and he has now informed us that in the beginning of November the application for the extension of the railway to Beyshehir was handed by Mr. Pears, the company's agent at Constantinople, to the chief of the Railway Department of the Ministry of Public Works, and a duplicate copy was handed to the Grand Vizierat; and he further advises me that on the 7th November a copy of the application in French was furnished to the embassy.

I beg now to enclose a copy of the company's application in duplicate, dated the 2nd November, for your information, and I have been desired by the president to add that he does not see how anything further can be done to forward the scheme at present; but he and the council are of opinion that it should commend itself to the Ottoman Government as soon as they have the time to give to it, and it is possible a situation may arise in which the Ambassador may be able to give valuable assistance in furtherance of the company's proposal.

I have, &c.
THOS. W. COOKE, *Secretary.*

Enclosure in No. 161.

Smyrna-Aidin Railway Company to Ottoman Minister of Public Works.

Constantinople, le 2 novembre, 1912.

Excellence,

LA Compagnie du Chemin de Fer de Smyrne-Aïdin, désireuse de faire profiter des bienfaits du chemin de fer les régions comprises entre le lac d'Eghirdir et le lac de Beychéhir, demande présentement la concession de la construction et de l'exploitation d'une ligne d'une longueur approximative de 80 kilom. partant d'un point du rivage oriental du lac d'Eghirdir à une distance d'environ 20 kilom. de la ville d'Eghirdir et aboutissant au rivage du lac de Beychéhir, et la construction facultative d'un embranchement à Sandikli, en partant d'un point de la ligne existante près de la station de Kara-Kouyou moyennant les conditions suivantes :—

1. La prolongation, à vingt-cinq années, de la durée de la concession des lignes actuellement exploitées par la compagnie (y inclus l'extension d'Eghirdir), soit à partir du 15 octobre, 1950 (N.S.), jusqu'au 15 octobre, 1975 (N.S.).

2. Les lignes présentement sollicitées formeront partie intégrante du réseau actuellement exploité par la compagnie et leur durée de concession prendra fin en même temps que celle de la concession principale à la date ci-dessus indiquée du 15 octobre, 1975 (N.S.).

3. Le Gouvernement Impérial ottoman s'engage à ne pas accorder, sans le consentement de la compagnie, à une autre personne ou société, la concession de la construction de toutes lignes de chemin de fer pouvant faire concurrence aux lignes concédées à la compagnie dans un rayon de 40 kilom., ou 25 milles, de chaque côté de la voie.

4. La compagnie s'engage à construire et à exploiter les lignes dont la concession est présentement sollicitée en conformité des conditions indiquées à l'article 3 de la convention du 18 (30) avril, 1888, c'est-à-dire à ses propres frais, risques et périls. La réception définitive de ces lignes aura lieu un an après leur réception provisoire.

En vue d'assurer l'exercice régulier du droit de contrôle général appartenant au Gouvernement Impérial ottoman la compagnie paiera chaque année, par versements mensuels, à l'ordre du Ministère des Travaux publics, à titre de frais de contrôle des lignes présentement sollicitées, la somme de £T. 3 par chaque kilomètre de ligne construite et exploitée, et ce, à partir de la date de la signature de la convention jusqu'à l'expiration de la concession.

5. Les transports sur le lac d'Eghirdir, entre la ligne existante et celle qui est proposée et *vice versâ* seront assurés par les soins de la Compagnie d'Aïdin au moyen de force de vapeur.

6. La Compagnie du Chemin de Fer d'Aïdin aura le droit de navigation sur le lac

de Beychéhir au moyen de force de vapeur ou autres moyens convenables, aussi bien que sur le lac d'Eghirdir.

7. Tout le matériel importé de l'étranger pour la construction de ce prolongement et pour l'établissement des moyens de transport sur les lacs seront importés en franchise de droits de douane.

8. Le prix de rachat des lignes présentement sollicitées sera de 4,600*l.* par kilomètre.

Le Gouvernement Impérial ottoman rachètera ces lignes, aussi bien que les lignes actuellement existantes, en conformité des dispositions des articles 4, 5 et 6 de la convention de 1888, la date du 15 octobre, 1935, mentionnée auxdits articles devant être, toutefois, remplacée par celle du 15 octobre, 1975.

9. Les clauses de la convention de 1888 non modifiées par la convention à intervenir seront également applicables dans leur intégralité aux lignes présentement sollicitées.

Me tenant à la disposition de votre Excellence pour tous renseignements supplémentaires, j'ai, etc.

[53280] No. 162.

Foreign Office to India Office.

Foreign Office, December 27, 1912.

(Confidential.)

Sir,

I AM directed by Secretary Sir E. Grey to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 13th instant regarding the future of the Anglo-Persian Oil Company in relation to the commercial and political position of this country in Persia and the Persian Gulf.

Mr. Greenway, who represents that company, called at this department on the 20th instant in relation to other business, and advantage was taken of his visit to obtain more precise information respecting the points indicated in your letter.

He said that, in the evidence he had recently given before the committee now enquiring into the question of oil fuel supplies for the navy, he had indicated to some extent the position of the Anglo-Persian Oil Company; he might supplement that evidence by saying that the directors of the Burmah Oil Company (which, he affirmed, controlled the Anglo-Persian Oil Company) had been approached in Glasgow by the directors of the Shell Transport Company with a view to acquiring control of the Anglo-Persian Oil Company by the purchase of a majority of the ordinary shares. This, Mr. Greenway said, would be tantamount to absorption, which would, moreover, be more advantageous financially to his company than an arrangement with the Shell Company either regulating the price of oil or transferring to that company the bulk of the Anglo-Persian Company's output.

On being pressed, Mr. Greenway admitted that such an arrangement might possibly be preliminary to actual absorption, but he was understood to say that provision for eventual absorption would be insisted upon in any arrangement made by the Shell Transport Company, and he added that it would therefore not be practicable for the Anglo-Persian Oil Company to undertake to give due notice to His Majesty's Government of an absorption.

I am, &c.
LOUIS MALLET.

[55372] No. 163.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(*Received December* 28.)

Constantinople, December 22, 1912.

(No. 1097.)

Sir,

WITH reference to your telegram No. 1092 of the 6th instant, on the subject of the concession of the Mesopotamian oil-fields applied for by Mr. D'Arcy, and the communication which you desired me to make to the Turkish Government in favour of Mr. D'Arcy's claim to the concession, I have the honour to report that I took the opportunity afforded at an interview which I had with the Minister for Foreign Affairs on the 10th instant of bringing the matter to his Excellency's notice. I reminded Gabriel Effendi that the question of the concession of the oil-fields in the Mosul and Bagdad vilayets had been the subject of negotiations between Mr. D'Arcy's represen-

tative and the Ottoman Government for a number of years, and that the attitude observed by the Government throughout these negotiations had been such as to give some encouragement to believe that a satisfactory basis would be found for giving the concession to Mr. D'Arcy. I informed Gabriel Effendi that His Majesty's Government expressed the hope that, in view of the efforts which had been made by Mr. D'Arcy, the concession in question would be given to no other concessionnaire, and that Mr. D'Arcy's rights to work those oil-fields would be fully recognised and granted. Gabriel Effendi intimated that he had no knowledge of the question, nor, as far as he was aware, had it come before the Cabinet, and that it was a matter which concerned the Ministry of Mines and Forests. He enquired whether the question of granting a concession had recently been raised, and what was the object of my representations at the present moment.

As you are doubtless aware, the consideration which was given by the Government to the railway project submitted by Mr. Chester rendered it impossible for Mr. D'Arcy to go on with his negotiations, and the final decisions of Government and Parliament with regard to this railway scheme had to be awaited. In my despatch No. 318 of the 14th April last I had the honour to report on the position of the Chester scheme and the disinclination of the American group to continue their negotiations in view of the very onerous conditions on which the Government proposed to grant the Youmurtalik concession. The general political situation, and the changes of Ministry which have taken place since last April, have not been favourable to the consideration anew of Mr. Chester's project, and it would be difficult to determine the views which the present Cabinet holds with regard to that scheme. It must also be observed that frequent changes at the Ministry of Mines have taken place since Mr. Nicols, Mr. D'Arcy's representative, last treated for the concession of the Mesopotamian oil-fields, and it is exceedingly unlikely that the present Minister has any knowledge of Mr. Nicols' application or of his negotiations with the department.

Because of these circumstances, and of the fact that, in the view of His Majesty's Government, it is highly desirable that the concession of these oil-fields should, if possible, be in British hands, I venture to think it very essential, in view of any representations which may have to be made by His Majesty's Embassy, that Mr. D'Arcy's representative should be in Constantinople to resume his relations with the Mining Department.

I have, &c.
GERARD LOWTHER.

[55374] No. 164.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 28.)

(No. 1100.)

Sir, *Constantinople, December 23, 1912.*

BEFORE replying to your despatch No. 558 of the 16th instant, calling for my observations on the suggestion of the Secretary of State for India that the time had perhaps come to press the Turkish Government for a reply to the British memorandum of the 18th July regarding the Bagdad Railway and the Persian Gulf questions, I thought it as well to approach the Minister for Foreign Affairs in a private and unofficial manner.

I asked his Excellency whether he could tell me whether the present Government had considered the matter and whether an answer could be expected shortly. His Excellency replied that he himself had examined the memorandum in a general manner, though not in great detail, but that the Cabinet had not had time to do so. He and the other members of the Cabinet were sincerely desirous of settling all outstanding points of difference that existed with His Majesty's Government, and once the serious questions, like the Balkan war, &c., which preoccupied the Government, were disposed of, he would be prepared to examine the matter and reply to His Majesty's Government.

It does not appear to me that we can further press the Government at this moment, but if the present Government remains in power after the conclusion of peace or if it should be followed by one of moderate views, the Turkish Government should be pressed for a reply.

I have, &c.
GERARD LOWTHER.

[55380] No. 165.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 28.)

(No. 1106.)

Sir, *Constantinople, December 23, 1912.*

BEFORE I was able to act on your telegram No. 1107 of the 17th instant and address the Sublime Porte again in reply to their note of the 4th December, copy of which was enclosed in my despatch No. 1044 of the 7th instant, it came to my knowledge that the Porte was about to make a concession regarding the opening of two ports in the Lebanon. I therefore deferred sending any reply.

I yesterday received the note, copy of which I have the honour to enclose herewith, together with the draft of the protocol for the appointment of the new Governor-General.

The covering note refers to the conditions under which the new ports, one for the Maronites and one for the Druzes, will be opened for steam-ships.

The protocol provides for the appointment of Ohannes Couyoumdjian Bey.

This gentleman was for some time councillor of embassy in Rome, and has now for three years been Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. He has the reputation of being a strictly honest official, of pleasant manners, and good temper, but unfortunately somewhat lacking in energy and determination. His selection cannot be said to be a very happy one, but on the whole he seemed to be the candidate amongst those put forward to whom the least objection could be offered.

The protocol then proceeds to enumerate the points on which additions have been made to the regulations and protocols in force :—

1. Deals with the election of members of the Administrative Council, assimilating this to the system in force at Zahla, which has worked satisfactorily, and the inhabitants of Deir-el-Kamar are to have a representative, while the Druze members of the council will be elected in the Shouf.

2. No member of the Administrative Council is to be liable to suspension by the governor, except after an enquiry and a decision to that effect on the part of the Administrative Council.

3. The budget is to be drawn up by the governor in concert with the council, and published three months before the financial period with which it deals.

4. The new governor is to study the application of a new survey and census and the question of the system of taxation, and at latest six months before the end of his term of office to submit to the Porte his proposals for the revision of article 5 of the Organic Statute of 1864 to be agreed upon between the Porte and the Powers.

The accounts of previous financial periods are to form the subject of a definite liquidation.

5. In commercial cases where the parties are all Libanese, local tribunals will be competent.

6. Local police to be raised to 1,200 men, their instruction being confided to one of the officers employed by the Turks for the reorganisation of the gendarmerie in Turkey.

All the above points were fully dealt with by Mr. Cumberbatch in the memorandum enclosed in his despatch No. 33, Confidential, of the 10th May, copy of which was forwarded in my despatch No. 439 of the 25th May.

Although all the desiderata have not been reached, I trust that on the whole the results arrived at may be considered satisfactory.

I have, &c.
GERARD LOWTHER.

Enclosure 1 in No. 165.

Note verbale communicated to Sir G. Lowther by Sublime Porte.

POUR faire suite à sa communication du 4 courant, le Ministère Impérial des Affaires Étrangères a l'honneur d'informer l'Ambassade de Sa Majesté britannique que le Gouvernement Impérial est disposé à accorder aux bâtiments à vapeur la faculté de faire des opérations douanières au port de Djouni, au nord de Beyrouth, et à celui de Béni-Younous, au sud, se réservant d'y établir, en nombre

suffisant pour empêcher toute contrebande, des préposés et gardes douaniers dépendant directement de l'Administration des Douanes de l'Empire.

Dans le cas où des institutions telles que les sociétés du port, des quais et du Chemin de Fer de Beyrouth subiraient un préjudice quelconque de cette faculté accordée pour les deux ports libanais susdits, le Gouvernement Impérial ottoman n'en serait pas tenu responsable.

Il reste bien entendu que toutes les taxes douanières perçues dans l'Empire, sans exception, continueront à être également perçues dans le Liban directement par les employés et au profit du Trésor Impérial, les douanes y étant placées exactement sur le même pied et régies par les mêmes règlements que les autres douanes de l'Empire. Il va sans dire que toutes les interdictions édictées par le Gouvernement Impérial concernant les armes, matières explosibles ou tous autres [*sic*] articles de quelque nature qu'ils soient, de même que les règlements sanitaires, sont également et strictement applicables dans tous les ports du littoral libanais.

Le Ministère Impérial aimé à espérer que, dans ces conditions, il n'existe plus aucun désaccord sur la rédaction ci-jointe du protocole relatif à la nomination d'un nouveau gouverneur, et que l'Ambassade britannique voudra bien, d'accord avec les missions des autres Puissances signataires des actes relatifs au Liban, accepter de fixer à lundi prochain, 23 courant, la réunion pour la signature de ce nouvel acte.

Sublime Porte, le 21 décembre, 1912.

Enclosure 2 in No. 165.

Protocol.

LE poste de Gouverneur du Liban étant devenu vacant par suite de l'expiration des pouvoirs de Youssouf Pacha, Sa Majesté Impériale le Sultan a daigné nommer à ce poste

Les représentants des Puissances signataires des règlements organiques et des protocoles du Liban réunis, en conférence avec le Ministre des Affaires Etrangères, sont unanimes pour constater par le présent protocole l'entente préalable qui, à l'occasion de cette nomination, s'est établie entre eux et la Sublime Porte, et pour maintenir la clause qui fixe à cinq ans, à partir de la date du présent protocole, la durée des pouvoirs du gouverneur. Ils ont été d'accord également pour ajouter aux règlements et protocoles visés ci-dessus les dispositions suivantes :—

1. Par analogie avec le mode d'élection en vigueur à Zahlé, les membres du Conseil administratif seront élus dans les arrondissements par les cheiks de villages, auxquels seront adjoints dans les villages comptant 100 contribuables ou davantage, 1 délégué par 100 contribuables. Le membre du conseil pour Zahlé continuera à être élu, comme précédemment, par des délégués nommés à raison de 1 par 50 contribuables.

Le nombre des membres du Conseil administratif élus par circonscription et leur proportion au point de vue des communautés représentées au sein du Conseil ne seront pas modifiés. Toutefois, les habitants du mudiriet de Deir-el-Kamar, privés jusqu'à présent de représentation au Conseil, seront appelés à y envoyer un membre de leur rite, et, d'autre part, le membre druze du conseil, élu jusqu'à présent au Djezzin, sera élu dans le Chouf.

2. Aucun membre du Conseil administratif, une fois élu, ne pourra être suspendu par le gouverneur, en cas de faute, abus ou manquement dans les devoirs de sa charge de conseiller administratif, qu'après enquête et sur avis conforme du Conseil administratif, auquel les résultats de l'enquête seront communiqués.

3. Le budget de prévision des recettes et des dépenses sera établi par le gouverneur avec le concours du Conseil administratif; il sera dressé et publié trois mois avant l'ouverture de l'exercice financier qu'il concerne.

4. Le gouverneur présentement nommé étudiera la revision du cadastre, du recensement et des divers taxes actuellement perçues; il procédera également à l'examen des questions accessoires, telles que celle des terrains "haradj ou émirié," qu'il est désirable de faire rentrer dans la règle commune; d'après les données ainsi recueillies, et six mois au plus tard avant l'expiration de ses pouvoirs, il présentera à la Sublime Porte ses propositions pour la revision de l'article 15 du Règlement organique du 6 septembre, 1864, à effectuer d'accord entre la Sublime Porte et les Puissances.

Les comptes des exercices antérieurs feront l'objet, à cette occasion, d'une liquidation définitive.

5. En matière commerciale dans les affaires où les parties seront toutes libanaises, les tribunaux de la Montagne seront compétents, en première et deuxième instance.

6. L'effectif du corps de police libanais prévu par l'article 14 du règlement de 1864 sera de 1,200 hommes et son instruction sera confiée pendant la durée nécessaire à l'un des officiers au service de la Turquie pour la réorganisation de la gendarmerie. Le supplément de dépenses qui en résultera sera réglé de façon à grever le moins possible le budget général de l'Empire.

En foi de quoi les plénipotentiaires respectifs ont signé le présent protocole et y ont apposé leurs sceaux.

Fait à Constantinople, le

[55479] No. 166.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 28.)

(No. 738.)
(Telegraphic.) R. *Constantinople, December 28, 1912.*

YOUR telegram No. 1155 of 23rd December: Mesopotamia oilfields.

Am making a communication in writing to the Turkish Government in the sense of your telegram No. 1092 of 6th December. I am, however, of opinion that representations in favour of D'Arcy would be more efficacious if made whilst D'Arcy is negotiating with Mining Department. I would therefore suggest that D'Arcy should send out representative to resume his relations with the department, which have been suspended for a considerable period.

From confidential enquiries I have made, it would appear that Germans are very sure of their ground in the matter of oilfields concession. The Germans have been careful all along to take necessary legal steps to maintain intact the rights which they claim under their original convention with the old Civil List.

[55515] No. 167.

Sir E. Goschen to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 30.)

(No. 532.)
Sir, *Berlin, December 24, 1912.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 525 of the 17th instant, I have the honour to report that the papers here announce that a new section of the Bagdad Railway, 32 miles long, which runs from Ulu Kishla, north-west of the Taurus Mountains, over the summit of the Taurus Pass to Karapuna, at the entrance of the Great Tshakit Gorge, was opened to traffic on the 21st instant. Karapuna is about 25 miles from Dorak in Cicilia, which is the western terminus of the section opened to traffic last April. The section between Karapuna and Dorak will, it is stated, not be completed for some time, as there are some extremely difficult tunnels to be constructed.

I have, &c.
W. E. GOSCHEN.

[55527] No. 168.

Sir G. Lowther to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 30.)

(No. 1113.)
Sir, *Constantinople, December 25, 1912.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 970 of the 18th ultimo, I have the honour to forward herewith a despatch from His Majesty's consul at Bussorah, reporting on the threatening attitude adopted by the Ajeymi-bin-Sadun.

I have, &c.
GERARD LOWTHER.

Enclosure in No. 168.

Consul Crow to Sir G. Lowther.

(No. 52.)

Sir, *Bussorah, November 29, 1912.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 47 of the 1st October last, I have the honour to report that the movements of Ajeymi-bin-Sadun are causing some uneasiness to the authorities at Bussorah. A small scare was caused at Bussorah on the 25th and 26th November, by a report from the Mudir of Zobeir to the effect that Ajeymi was about to threaten to approach Bussorah with a view to making a hostile descent on the town, and that he was then at some distance from Zobeir with an armed following of about 2,000 men.

The bazaar and the offices of the bank were closed. Many Christian families fled from Bussorah town to the suburb of Ashar and some of them sought refuge at the Russian and American consulates on the road. Christian clerks in business establishments brought their families to the firms' offices and a panic prevailed. Seyyid Talib Bey, the deputy, and the acting vali, at once adopted defensive measures to protect the town. Soldiers and marines and two mountain guns were moved out to the desert at the back of the town and a number of armed Arabs were collected from the districts south of Bussorah and moved on to the desert with the troops. The arrival of the armed Arab force from the villages did not conduce to allay the panic as the men came in shouting their "hosa," or war cry, and firing off their rifles in every direction. There were, however, no casualties. Meanwhile a letter was dispatched by the vilayet to Ajeymi's camp by two special messengers, asking him the reason for his approach with an armed force. No reply has yet been received to the letter, and the authorities are awaiting the return of their messengers.

Nothing happened, and the troops were withdrawn and sent back to their barracks and the armed villagers ordered to return to their homes. The military authorities proceeded to Zobeir and ascertained that Ajeymi is encamped at Chabda, about twelve hours distance from Bussorah.

I am informed that Sheikh Salim-el-Khaiyun, a friend and supporter of Ajeymi-bin-Sadun at Hammar, who is a captain of "shebana," or river guards, and also Sheikh of the Beni Sedd, has lately been removed from his post of sheikh owing to his connection with Ajeymi, whose movements arouse suspicion in the minds of the authorities. The acting vali has now got hold of Sheikh Salim, and he is the bearer of the vilayet letter to Ajeymi, to which the authorities are now awaiting a reply.

It is possible that Ajeymi, out of dudgeon at the removal of his friend Salim from his post, and for other reasons connected with his father's captivity and death, may entertain some hostile feeling towards the Bussorah local authorities, and may perhaps meditate a *coup* on Bussorah in view of the weakness of the garrison. The armed force in Bussorah town does not, I am informed, exceed 300 armed men, including the nizam troops, the marines, and the gendarmerie. The authorities can, however, as was seen on the 25th instant, call up the assistance of a considerable number of armed villagers, who would, no doubt, obey the orders of Seyyid Talib Bey, who is now assisting the acting vali to govern the district. An application has been addressed to Bagdad for reinforcements, and I hear that Ali Reza Pasha has already started from Bagdad on the river steamer "Mosul" with two battalions and some artillery.

His Majesty's ship "Sphinx" arrived in Bussorah harbour from Mohammerah on the 27th instant, and will remain here a week according to present arrangements. This may serve to strengthen the *moral* of the inhabitants until the reinforcements arrive from Bagdad.

I have, &c.
F. E. CROW.

[55654] No. 169.

Admiralty to Foreign Office.—(Received December 30.)

(Confidential.)

Sir, *Admiralty, December 28, 1912.*

WITH reference to Foreign Office letter of the 15th November and later communications, on the subject of the oil-fields in Mesopotamia and Persia, I am commanded by my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty to state their views for the information of Sir Edward Grey on the points raised.

2. From the correspondence which took place with the Foreign Office in 1909 (and referred to in Admiralty letter of 26th September, 1912) it appeared to my Lords that the Mesopotamian concessions were open to negotiation, and by no means definitely claimable by a group in which foreign interests might predominate or have a large influence. It would seem from recent correspondence that this is also Sir Edward Grey's view, and they note with much satisfaction the communications which it has been practicable to address to His Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople in this matter. The British Imperial interests in the Persian field were sufficiently strong, as explained in the Admiralty letter above referred to, fully to justify the Admiralty in recommending that diplomatic support might be given to the Anglo-Persian Oil Company in respect of their application for concessions in Mesopotamia, and to use all legitimate influence to prevent if possible the foreign acquisition of control of the Persian fields via Mesopotamia. The Admiralty on their side intend in respect of Admiralty contracts to give as favourable consideration as practicable to tenders from the Anglo-Persian Oil Company, consistently with due consideration of supplies from other available sources.

3. There would, however, be great objections to the proposal that the Admiralty should themselves embark, or recommend the Secretary of State for India in Council to embark, upon a policy of finding 2,000,000*l.* of capital for a British company operating in territory which, although presumably largely subject to British influence, is nevertheless foreign territory. Although the proposal is that such advance shall be repaid it would depend upon the success of the company both in finding its supplies and in maintaining its markets against powerful commercial rivals whether the money would be repaid, and the Government would be obliged to appoint representatives to sit upon the board of a commercial company engaged in a business subject to much speculative risk.

4. My Lords have more than grave doubts whether such a policy could be recommended to Parliament on naval grounds, and they think it will be clear to Sir Edward Grey that to attach such far-reaching obligations to ordinary Admiralty contracts might raise immediately or in the future questions of foreign policy outside the province of the Admiralty, and possibly in certain eventualities questions of military and naval protection in which the Indian Government would be largely concerned. If such a policy could be advocated from the Admiralty point of view alone, which is not the case, there are other oil-fields in which the arguments for similar action might prove to be equally or even more cogent, especially if the fields were in actual British territory, and within a shorter open sea voyage from the United Kingdom than the route from the Persian Gulf either via the Suez Canal or the Cape.

5. In reply to Mr. Greenway's remarks as to the Admiralty being unwilling to place before the Secretary of State for India in Council a proposal for an Indian subsidy to this company, to include a sub-contract for Admiralty benefit, the present position is that the Admiralty are in communication with the India Office as to whether there is any prospect of Persian oil being adopted by the Indian Government for railways on its merits of quality and price, and the Admiralty have not yet received a definite reply. Mr. Greenway is fully aware that cheap Indian coal will necessarily remain a formidable competitor with oil on some of the Indian railways, and, therefore, if the Persian oil products cannot be adopted on their merits, either for Indian railway purposes or for other purposes for the benefit of the Indian consumer, the Admiralty in inviting the India Office to take up the question of subsidy, would be practically asking for a subsidy from India to the company indirectly for the benefit of Imperial services. Moreover, the company's proposal in respect of India involves proposals for preferential fiscal treatment of oil imported from Persia into India. This attitude in no way precludes the matter being put to the India Office by the Anglo-Persian Company on its merits.

6. My Lords note that the possible political aspect of the question from the Foreign Office and India Office points of view has been the subject of a communication from the Foreign Office to the India Office.

7. In respect of negotiations between the Anglo-Persian Company and the Shell Company, Mr. Greenway indicated, if an agreement were ultimately unavoidable, contracts with the Admiralty on ordinary terms might possibly be arranged with the Anglo-Persian Company outside of any such arrangement.

8. If that course were followed, and if the Indian Government were also able, on the merits of the question, to utilise oil fuel on certain of the Indian railways where there might be an advantage in the use of oil over coal, considerable support would be given to the position of the company on grounds that would not be of an exceptional

character. If, in addition, continued diplomatic support is given to the company in respect of the Mesopotamian concessions, in order to avoid, if possible, the bringing of other foreign influence into the Persian fields, my Lords are of opinion that, apart from any political considerations which in the judgment of Sir Edward Grey or the Secretary of State for India in Council might justify more exceptional measures, as much governmental support as present circumstances admit would be given to the preservation of the commercial independence of the Anglo-Persian Company.

9. My Lords have already expressed their general regret at any extension of influence which may tend to a greater monopoly in the oil fuel market by powerful combinations, but they have to consider, from the purely Admiralty point of view in each case, whether Admiralty interests would be so jeopardised as to necessitate the consideration of the larger question of subsidising commercial companies, a policy which they have hitherto declined to entertain in other cases, and which, if once begun, would probably have to be extended, and it is at present very difficult to say in regard to any oil-field, however important in certain eventualities it might become, whether it is likely to stand in any absolutely pre-eminent or exclusive position from the Admiralty point of view.

10. My Lords are forwarding a copy of this letter to the India Office.

I am, &c.
O. MURRAY.

[173/13] No. 170.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir H. Bax-Ironside.

(No. 47.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, December* 30, 1912.

THE Bulgarian Minister said to-day that his Government were appealed to on behalf of the Armenians. He did not know that Bulgaria could do much, but the lot of the Armenians was so distressing that he felt it a humanitarian duty to mention the subject, especially as after the war it was feared that their lot might be still worse.

I said that I also had had appeals made to me. It was a question which concerned the good government of Asia Minor. It was one which must be discussed between the Powers, and could not be dealt with by one alone. Up to the present, the Powers had been so occupied with European questions that they had not been able to discuss Asiatic questions; and, until the European difficulties were out of the way, I did not think that they would be able to attend to any others. But I admitted the importance of the question.

I am, &c.
E. GREY.

[55822] No. 171.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received December 31.)

THE Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and forwards herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, copy of a telegram to the Viceroy, dated the 24th December, 1912, regarding Debai.

India Office, December 30, 1912.

Enclosure in No. 171.

The Marquess of Crewe to Government of India.

(Telegraphic.) P. *India Office, December* 24, 1912.

DEBAI. Your action, as reported by telegram on the 11th instant, is confirmed, but before your Government commit yourselves definitely I should wish to consider the further report of the resident, Bushire.

[55884] No. 172.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received December 31.)

THE Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and forwards herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, copy of a telegram from the Viceroy, dated the 28th December, 1912, regarding the lighting and buoyage of the Persian Gulf.

India Office, December 31, 1912.

Enclosure in No. 172.

Government of India to the Marquess of Crewe.

(Telegraphic.) P. *December* 28, 1912.

PERSIAN Gulf.

Reference is invited to the letters from the Resident, Bushire, dated the 13th October, and (to the Minister, Tehran), 24th November. His view as to the desirability of obtaining from the Persian Government a general recognition of our right to control lighting and buoyage in the Gulf is endorsed by us, but we recommend that pending the completion of our present scheme, the matter should be left in abeyance, unless a really favourable opportunity, precluding the possibility of a Persian refusal, presents itself.

[55479] No. 173.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Lowther.

(No. 584.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, December* 31, 1912.

WITH reference to your Excellency's telegram No. 758 of the 28th December, respecting the concession for the oilfields in Mesopotamia, I have to request your Excellency to inform me, in full detail, of the foundation for the statements contained in the last paragraph of your telegram.

This information is required in order that a legal investigation of the German claim may be made.

It is very desirable to procure precise information regarding the nature of the German claim.

I am, &c.
E. GREY.

[55479] No. 174.

Foreign Office to Mr. Greenway.

Sir, *Foreign Office, December* 31, 1912.

I AM directed by Secretary Sir E. Grey to inform you that a telegram has been received from His Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople, stating that he is making a communication in writing to the Turkish Government, as instructed, to the effect that His Majesty's Government hope that the concession for the Mesopotamian oil-fields will not be given to concessionnaires other than Mr. D'Arcy, but Sir G. Lowther states that he is of opinion that representations in favour of Mr. D'Arcy would be more efficacious if made whilst Mr. D'Arcy is negotiating with the mining department.

Sir G. Lowther therefore suggests that Mr. D'Arcy should send out a representative to resume his relations with the department, which have been suspended for a very considerable period.

I am, &c.
LOUIS MALLET.